Christian Courier

A REFORMED WEEKLY

MARCH 3, 1995/No. 2434

Niagara Falls conference gains new momentum for Reformed vision

Bert Witvoet

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. — The sixth "Serving Christ in the Nineties" conference held at the Mt. Carmel Retreat Centre here chose the theme "The other side of 40," meaning people younger than 40 addressing people over 40, and vice versa.

The concern that all sought to address was: Will the Reformed vision be passed on, and if so, how? The conference drew 60 conferees, 15 of them under 40.

One team of four speakers (two under and two over 40) looked backward and addressed how they came to treasure the Reformed world and life view. Another team of two over and two under 40 was to ask questions or express hopes for the future.

What made this conference unique was the story character of many presentations. Speaker after speaker shared his or her personal experience within the Reformed community, and by so doing revealed the deep emotional impact left by the struggles many had encountered.

Surrender and opened eyes

Teacher Aarda Rooks of Ancaster, Ont., slightly under 40, used the metaphor of our lives being a tapestry, and God the master weaver. She highlighted three threads in her Reformed tapestry: *reassurance* in the teaching that Jesus Christ is Lord of all of life; *guilt* from thinking that she could never do

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BERT WITVOET

Under 40 addresses over 40. From l. to r.: Dennis Van Staalduinen, Aarda Rooks, Sylvan Gerritsma, Hilda Roukema.

Canada and Australia swap Christian school co-ordinators

Reformed excitement is infectious

James Kwantes

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. — "G'day, mate" is the last greeting one might expect to hear from a Society for Christian Schools in B.C. co-ordinator. Not any more.

Australian Andrew White joined the society in January as part of a six-month exchange program with John Vanderhoek of SCSBC. The men have swapped jobs and houses, with White moving into Vanderhoek's Abbotsford home. Andrew's wife, Lesley, is working towards her Phd in social ecology at the University of British Columbia's faculty of education, where she was accepted as a visiting scholar. In Australia, she lectures at the University of Western Sydney. The couple's 18-year-old son, Alex, has also moved to Canada.

JAMES KWANTES

Andrew White (right) with wife Lesley and son Alex, in their Abbotsford, B.C. home.

The family's Canadian visit got off to a rocky start when the car they were driving (John Vanderhoek's) was stolen from a Vancouver parking lot. The couple was shopping there for replacement clothes after Lesley's luggage had gone missing on her flight from Europe. Two men just out of jail used the car to commit a series of robberies, and it was totalled in a resulting police chase.

"People here have been apologizing to me about the high crime in Vancouver, but in the big cities of Australia, it's probably just as bad," says White.

Influence on government policy

White says that during his stay in Canada he hopes to gain an understanding of the Christian school society's structure and priorities. He has spent his time taking workshops, and visiting and speaking at Christian schools around the province.

In Australia, White works for a society called Christian Parent-Controlled Schools (CPCS). Its first school opened in 1961 and the society has since grown to 70 member schools and 20,000 students.

Society schools in Australia receive about 50 per cent funding from the government, similar to schools in British Columbia. White notes that his school society has more influence on Australian government policy than its numbers would seem to warrant because it co-operates with other Christian and independent school

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News

Reformed community challenged to maximize positive points

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enough for the kingdom, something she has learned to surrender to Christ; and *hope* because God is already now restoring creation.

Hilda Roukema, a teacher from the Brampton, Ont., area, slightly over 40, shared how her parents had emphasized the need for Christian schooling for their children and how that created tensions in the Canadian Reformed churches her father pastored.

In the '80s she did a practicum in the United Church, which opened her eyes to what that church was missing, she said. That helped develop a deep appreciation for Scripture and for Reformed teachings such as the sovereignty of God, and helped her understand the grace of God in her life, she said.

I am not my own

Sylvan Gerritsma (over 40), owner of a tool supply service in St. Catharines, Ont., told about growing up in Sioux Center, Iowa. His early faith was doctrine oriented, but in school he learned about the Kuyperian vision of faith encompassing all of life.

"The idea of norms grabbed me," recalled Gerritsma. "At first it was a black and white understanding. I had to learn there were boundaries within which the Creator allowed some freedom." Gerritsma briefly talked about his trial by fire as a G.I. in Vietnam, where he learned about the huge gap between "God's normed world and human responses." After that experience, which he described as hell, he could never see the world in the same light, he said.

Gerritsma expressed the hope that the Reformed vision will grab his kids, a vision he summed up in the confession taken from the *Heidelberg Catechism*: '... that I'm not my own, but belong — body and soul, in life and in death — to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ."

BERT WITVOET

Keynote speaker Al Wolters

Washed feet are enough

Dennis Van Staalduinen, definitely under 40, and publications officer for Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont., humorously sketched how he struggled through a pietistic period. Time and again he sought to be "born again" at revivalist meetings, "but I could never make it stick."

When he entered Redeemer College as a student he learned that he did not need to continually undergo a radical conversion but that, like the Apostle Peter, he was already clean — it was enough to have his feet washed by the Lord and to be refreshed and renewed by the community of believers.

He ended by asking what the Reformed community is doing for the renewal of personal lives, churches, institutions, society and the world.

A list of pros and cons

Keynote speaker Dr. Al Wolters, professor of biblical studies at Redeemer College, talked about the "communal story" of the reformational vision in Canada. But he, too, made his account personal. He identified both positive and negative features of the Reformed tradition.

Among the positive aspects Wolters listed: the hard work and successes of the Reformed Dutch-Canadians; their speedy assimilation into Canadian life; and the establishment of churches, denominational agencies, Christian day schools and various non-ecclesiastical organizations. He especially emphasized the promotion of a kingdom vision that has proved to be attractive to Christians from other traditions.

But there have been negative qualities, too, Wolters pointed out: acrimonious controversies; the formation of separate camps; the fact that policy matters were raised to the level of principle; that plain speaking was cultivated at the expense of tact and love; and that friendships and family ties were subordinated to personal convictions.

Wolters also pointed out that the Kuyperians had generally won out and, as a result, the other camps, the pietists and the doctrinalists felt alienated.

God does not need Dutch Calvinists

In his second lecture, Wolters examined how the Reformed community can maximize the positive points and minimize the negative ones.

But first, he painted a bleak hypothetical picture in which one's worst fears about churches, Christian schools and Christian organizations had come true. Even then, the Kingdom of God, which is cosmic, ecumenical and global, would survive quite well without the kingdom vision of the Dutch Calvinists, said Wolters.

Ethical guidelines

To minimize past mistakes, Reformed Christians with a Kuyperian vision have to reintegrate wholesome piety and sound doctrine into their life, making the person of Jesus Christ central.

Wolters also said the Reformed tradition should draw on the resources of the charismatic renewal movement. He further proposed ethical guidelines by which believers can learn to wrestle, admonish and disagree with each other in love. These guidelines are:

1. protect and promote the reputation of the person with whom you disagree;
2. avoid sarcasm and don't try to score rhetorical points;
3. avoid caricature, which allows you to knock down a straw man;
4. avoid public polemics that do not edify;
5. be in touch with the person with whom you debate;
6. be prepared to suffer unjustly.

A move towards reconciliation

Wolters said we must keep "a dynamic sense of boundaries," a flexible understanding of the point at which we can no longer go along with a person or a group. He made references to Dr. Henk Hart of the Institute for Christian Studies, who was at the conference, and with whom he has had strong disagreements in the past. In spite of their disagreements, and though "Hart's cable is stretched further" than his, Wolters acknowledged they're both still tied to the same anchor.

It was clear as the conference progressed that conferees were buoyed by the presentations and discussions. Even the organizers admitted to being pleasantly surprised at how well the presentations had gone, and how a momentum towards reconciliation was building.

At the concluding plenary session the possibility of seeking greater reconciliation between Reformed organizations and leaders was proposed as the topic for next year's conference. The stories of pain from the over-40 presenters combined with the hopes of the under-40 presenters to produce a longing for a fuller and more Christ-like Reformed vision and practice.

BERT WITVOET

Nelly Westerhoff

Hopes for the future

Nelly Westerhof, an over-40 presenter, best captured the convictions of the conference when she expressed these hopes for future generations: that prayer be seen as hard work; that the individual be subordinated to the communal; that preachers maintain the discipline of powerful preaching; that a gentle kind of discipline be exercised to keep life difficult; that the momentum of Christian organizations be maintained; that hard work and giving remain; and that love and sentiment not be confused with each other.

Above all, Westerhof expressed the hope that future generations will examine everything and remain tethered to biblical truths.

(Note: some of the presentations will be published in future issues of CC)

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News

Aussie educator appreciates B.C. Christian curriculum

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systems at the political level.

The original eight schools of the CPCS were all initiated by Reformed people. "Their excitement about Christian schooling was infectious," says White. "They worked hard to expand the idea of Christian schools to other people who had a similar vision."

Tradition of 'Reformed thinking'

The profile has changed however. Of the 70 schools, about 40 were broadly interdenominational from the start. White says there is quite a tradition of "Reformed thinking" in non-Reformed churches in Australia — and this is one reason the vision of Christian schools was picked up so quickly by Christians from other churches.

"Many denominations in Australia, like the Baptist and Anglican, consider themselves Reformed theologically," White notes. "They have a strong sense that our lives here are part of a continuity with life everlasting."

White was raised a Baptist and his church affiliation in Australia is traditional Baptist. In Abbotsford, the Whites are attending Trinity Christian Reformed Church. White has noticed that among Reformed Christians, Christian schools are an integral part of life.

"Even if there were no funding, they would dig a few more ditches or drive a few more loads to make it happen," he says. "The Christian schools in Ontario and the United States, which do not receive any government funding, are a real inspiration to us in Australia."

Parent versus state

White says that Christian schools in Australia were called "parent-controlled" when they started to differentiate them from state-controlled schools. Unfortunately, he says, the name is now sometimes used to pit parents against teachers.

"'Parent-controlled' does not mean that parents have some God-given right to control the school," says White. He notes that another Christian school federation in Australia has given its schools the more accurate name of "Christian Community Schools." "There must be a partnership between the home, family and the school."

The challenge of getting all the partners to co-operate is heightened in the schools CPCS runs in tough, inner-city neighborhoods. White helped out for eight months as a principal in one such school. While it started as a school for the children of Christian families, it no longer has that profile. The challenge, White says, is developing an approach that takes into account the family needs and social reality of the students while maintaining a Christian worldview focus.

"We interviewed people who had never darkened the door of a church but wanted to send their kids to a Christian school as a sort of oasis for them," says White. The school linked Christian families with non-Christian families in an effort to provide a support network.

More than devotions

"We impressed it upon these parents that the school was not merely a public school with devotions, and made it very plain to them: 'You better be ready for big changes as a family.'"

White says the longer tradition of Christian schools in North America has led to a curriculum that is better-developed than its Australian counterpart.

"There seems to be more of a general agreement about what it means to be a Christian school and to teach from a Christian perspective," he notes.

White has also noticed that the different Christian schools in the B.C. society work very closely together. As an example, he cites the practice of principal evaluation, in which a Christian school principal is evaluated by board members, teachers and principals from other schools.

"This shows alot of trust and confidence," White says. "In Australia, it would be seen as encroaching somewhat on the authority of the local school, and the principal may feel uncomfortable.

Little impact on secularism

White describes his home country as a very secular society. Only about 10 per cent of Australians attend church regularly, and White says the Christian community "is ill-equipped to have any sort of impact on government initiatives." He contrasts the role religion plays in Australian society to American society, where the president is expected to go to church and be sensitive to Christian concerns.

"If you're a good bloke and you reckon there might be a God and you'll have a drink with the boys, that'll get you elected," White says with a laugh.

In addition to working with Christian schools in Australia, White also helped develop the National Institute for Christian Education, a teacher development college in Sydney. The institute currently offers "distance education" (courses by correspondence) but plans to build facilities in 1998.

White is also helping to organize an International Conference for Christian Education, to be held in Sydney in July 1996. He is inviting Christian school teachers and board members from North America to live with an Australian family and work in an Australian school for a week.

"Most people have never thought of something as crazy as going to Australia! We want them to think about it."

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Redeemer College to add business co-op program

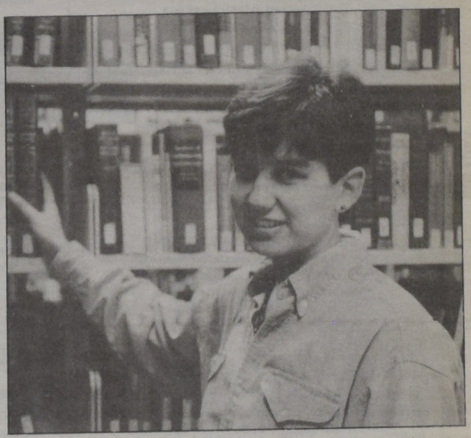
CC Staff

ANCASTER, Ont. — Redeemer College has announced it will open a co-op program in business at the start of the next academic year in September. The program will give business students "relevant job experience in a real work environment," says John Boersma, professor of business and director of the co-op program. The program is optional. Currently seven of the 30-35 students in the Redeemer business program are signed up for the first co-op.

Employers will take students for up to two eight-month work terms. Students may work both terms with the same employer or may choose a different employer for each term. (A student's first work term would run from January to August in his or her third year; the second term from summer through December.)

The program will help students "develop the maturity and confidence so necessary to a fulfilling career" and will expose students "to techniques and technology...in a way that could never be offered in a conventional classroom setting," says the college.

Redeemer expects that even subsequent course work "will benefit from the time spent in a real employment situation." There are several practical benefits, too: "Marketable job experience" will "greatly improve" students' job prospects; co-op students are able to "'test drive' a career to discover likes and dislikes; and students will receive an income from their work experience.



COURTESY REDEEMER COLLEGE

Kristin Vanderboor, a second-year Redeemer College student, has a definite interest in the co-op program in business. She thinks it may be just the edge she needs to secure a position with an accounting firm.

Editorial

Mercy should not precede, but may follow, justice

Robert Latimer of Wilkie, Saskatchewan, is back in court, asking the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal to overturn his murder conviction in the death of his severely disabled daughter, Tracy. The 12-year-old girl died of carbon monoxide poisoning in October 1993 when her father, by his own admission to police, placed her in the cab of his truck, rigged up a pipe from the exhaust of the truck into the cab, turned on the engine, and waited for her to die. He told police he killed his daughter to end her suffering.

Many Canadians, though they may not approve of what Latimer did, are sympathetic and want his sentence reduced or quashed. They think either that mercy killing is warranted in extreme cases or that it deserves the seasoning of mercy sentencing. More than 6,000 people have signed a petition asking for a shorter sentence, and money is pouring into the Latimer trust fund to help pay for his legal bills. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association wants the federal Justice Minister to revoke the sentence.

But there is a community that is upset about the sympathy extended to Robert Latimer. They don't believe that anyone should go unpunished after taking someone else's life, no matter how well-intentioned he may have been. Among those are advocacy groups for the disabled. The disabled feel very much threatened by what Latimer did, especially if he should get off lightly. What if someone should decide to end *their* suffering? Their concern has been given recognition by the courts in that two groups that speak for the disabled have been given the right to present written arguments to the three appeal court judges.

The voice of the disabled should carry some weight. It certainly would be wrong to declare Latimer innocent of any wrongdoing or to let him go unpunished. But a life sentence seems too harsh for a man who is needed by his family, on the farm and who may have been driven to despair by his daughter's great suffering.

My thoughts flit to another edge of life issue that plagues our society: abortion. The threatened group in this case consists of unborn babies. In Canada there is no law that protects unborn babies from well-intentioned doctors in abortion clinics and mothers who cannot or will not face the outcome of their pregnancies. But unborn babies have no voice. They cannot procure for themselves the right to have written arguments presented in Canadian courts. They do not even know what threatens them.

And then I think of another court that awaits all of us at the end of life. And I wonder: Is God going to call on all the aborted, killed and unwanted people in the world to appear as witnesses when we stand before him and see him open the book of our lives? It's not an unlikely scenario.

One thing we know for sure, God hears the cries of those who were considered expendable by our society. In the case of Abel, who was killed by his brother Cain, it was his blood that cried out from the ground. That's the scary part about life: no killing ever gets lost in the mist of time. The comforting part is that even so, there is mercy.

BW

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50th Anniversary Rearview Mirror

The Canadian Reformed community in Canada was still small in 1949. Many immigrants across the country knew each other and cared about what was going on in each others' lives. CC reflected that:

The Canadian Calvinist, November 1949

VANCOUVER — The Immigration Society met on October 28. A very interesting meeting was held with a fine attendance. Rev. Paul DeKoekkoek discoursed on various aspects of immigration work and attitudes of immigrants. Some beautiful selections were given by the choir. A delicious lunch was enjoyed by those who attended after which business matters were disposed of.

President Mr. D. Radstaak. Secretary Mr. J. Vander Velden, 3520 E. 24th Ave., Vancouver, B.C.

HOUSTON — Young Jans Stad, who himself was an immigrant a year ago, was gladdened very much when at Jasper he might meet his brother Willem who arrived with him here on Tuesday the 2nd of November. The Stad Brothers are of Daarle, Overijsel, Netherlands.

OWEN SOUND — The president of our immigration Society is Rev. R. J. Bos, 560—8th St., E., Owen Sound, Ontario.

TORONTO–New arrival: Mr. J. Mast and family. Mrs. J. Sloot has recovered from a recent operation.

BRAMPTON — New arrival: Mr. J. Haan and family.

DIXIE — New arrival: Mr. and Mrs. A. VanderMeer.

WINDSOR — New arrivals: Mr. and Mrs. Vander Meer. Mr. and Mrs. Meijer. Mr. and Mrs. Hulsbos, living respectively in Essex, Harrow and Cottam.

RENFREW — Mr. W. Bijlsma and family, formerly of Renfrew, Ont., now live at Scotland, Ont., c/o C. Bannister, R.R. 1.

Mr. B. J. Kloosterziel and family, formerly of Cobden, moved into the vicinity of Toronto.

New arrivals from the Netherlands are: Mr. J. De Wal and Family,c/o Wm. N. Robertson, R.R. 1, Cornwall, Ont., for the Martintown district.

HOLLAND MARSH — New arrivals: Family De Bow from Jutjegast. The Nevens, Groens.

English classes will again begin in November for all those interested. Mr. Uitvlugt and Miss Knapper will be the teachers.

LACOMBE — Mr. and Mrs. Uitvlught arrived with two children, also Gerrit Datema and Roelof Pater.

SPORTS

A coach's thoughts: *before the 'big game'*

John Byl

My heart beats at a nervously accelerated rate as I consider how to best set up our offensive and defensive strategies. I take a deep breath after making my decision. I feel a touch faint as I've expended some focused energy. This is three days before a big game and I'll be experiencing this many times till the game is over — and perhaps afterwards as well.

I wake up at 5 a.m. and my mind immediately slicks into high gear, running the other team's plays in my head and preparing our attacks and blocks. My mind will skip back in previous games when certain plays ran well and others did not. I wonder if I should have substituted a little earlier or a little later, and what impact that might have made.

We won our last game; the team is playing well. Let's get on with the big game — in some ways I wish it were over already, but I have two days to "wait" and "prepare." The alarm goes off at 7 a.m. I saw the clock at 6:00 but must have fallen asleep again. I'm thankful for the extra sleep.

I see a team member in the hall at the college. The flu bug is going around and although he was sick last week, thankfully no one else is. He did come into the game and scored several key points.

The team is ready to play. I hope no one else gets sick — but they'll play anyway. I wonder, though, how much weaker the team would be if another key player were out? When would I know? I always watch the warm-ups to see how people are doing, and I should be able to pick it up then. And so I watch and evaluate every player.

Discerning spiritual direction

In my office I see my Bible and wonder what Scripture passage we should read before the game. Do I read about the Leviathan praising God by frolicking in the sea (Psalm 104) — it will be an important game, but — relax! — we should be playful.

Or do I take Neal's suggestion and read about Christ's suffering on the cross and how he stuck through it even though he could easily have stopped — we should play with similar intensity.

But then I wonder if I am using Scripture to nurture winning athletes? Maybe I won't read at all, just pray with them.

I know we will pray after the team is loaded into the team van. We will praise God for his good gifts. We will ask for safe keeping of all players, on both teams, as we travel and play. We will also pray that all players, on both teams, will play well. (I wonder briefly if I should skip this last point on this game day — it's a more important game than we previously played. In some ways, if the other team is a little off their game that would be helpful. Is this sin coming through?)

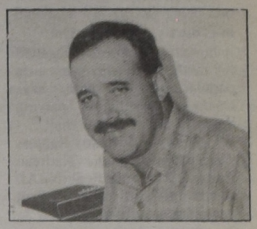
Giving one's best

And I wonder if there will be ball games in heaven. I wonder if the teams will use coaches. If I were coaching there, would I wake up early? Would I run through every possible scenario I could think of? Would my heart flutter in anticipation and my intestines gurgle with anxiety? Will I be different in heaven than on earth? Should I not be on this earth what I hope to be in the New Earth? Isn't that true for all of us in the way we play, coach and live our lives? As we travel through life's roads, we'll need to ask God to help us do that.

John Byl is an overly intense coach of the Redeemer College men's volleyball team which is vying for a play-off spot.

Where will our future farmers come from?

Agricultural



There's nothing more satisfying than watching some of our rural youth busy with 4-H projects. Last year nearly 44,000 young Canadians were enrolled in 4-H clubs. And about 12,000 volunteer adults guided the 4-H members through numerous club projects.

To better prepare young people to serve Canada in the future, 4-H is increasing its focus on skill-development projects that teach citizenship, leadership, co-operation, communication, responsibility and independence.

The roots of 4-H go back to 1913 and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Roland, Man. Members now usually range in age from nine to 21, although some provinces have junior programs starting at an earlier age. Raising beef is still the most popular 4-H project. But others, including photography, conservation, sports, consumerism and drama, are also becoming popular.

But don't expect very many of the 44,000 4-H members to choose farming as a career. Gerry Rook, a past provincial director on the Ontario 4-H Council, says three to five per cent of all present 4-H members will stay on the farm. Rook says some 4-H-ers will work in an agri-related business but many will work at something entirely different.

That brings me to this question: Where will Canada's future farmers come from? It's been said that had it not been for young Dutch would-be-farmers immigrating to Canada after World War II, Canada would have had a serious milk shortage. Many of those immigrants became very successful dairy farmers.

Farmers aging out

While it's true that Canada and Europe might have too many farmers trying to make a living off the land, there is concern for the future. Over half of European farmers are over 55 years old and many have no heirs, says a report published in the *British Farmers Weekly*.

Between 1980 and 1990, there was a 13 per cent drop in the number of farms in the EU. The largest drop was in Denmark, where 34 per cent of farms disappeared. During the same period, EU farms increased in size by 11 per cent, but average farm size remains relatively small, ranging from 10 acres in Greece to 168 in the U.K. Young EU farmers tend to be in horticulture or dairy farming.

Statistics Canada says Canada's young farmers are quickly becoming discouraged and abandoning agriculture at an increasing rate, while those who stay are forced to take a second job to make ends meet.

Between 1986 and 1991, the number of farmers under age 35 dropped by half, prompting the agency to worry there are not enough new farmers.

The average age of a Canadian farmer is 49, two years older than in the 1986 report, with 25 per cent of all farmers now aged 60 or older; 16 per cent are under 35. About 26 per cent of farmers are women.

The *Financial Post* (Oct. 25, 1994) says that difficult economic conditions have meant that about 38 per cent of Canada's 391,000 farmers now have another job to support their operations, even though the number of farms earning more than $50,000 doubled to 119,000. The number of farms also dropped from a peak of 733,000 in 1941 to 280,00 in 1991. In 1986 there were 293,000 farms.

Sally Rutherford, executive director of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, says the increasing average age is a concern since it means farm life is no longer as attractive as it once was for young families.

Maynard Vander Galien is a dairy farmer in the Ottawa Valley (Renfrew). He grew up on a dairy farm in the Netherlands and came to Canada with his parents in 1953.

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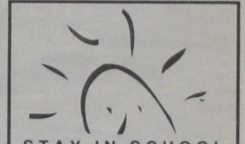

STAY IN SCHOOL

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NC

Sports good for fellowship and outreach

...continued from page 20

volleyball tournament, the latest one being on the last weekend in February in Clinton, Ont.

In summer, slo-pitch baseball for both men and women is popular in the area, says Datema, who enjoys playing both baseball and volleyball.

Once the Toronto Raptors start playing in the National Basketball Association (NBA), Datema predicts that basketball could become more popular in the area. "The major leagues dictate what goes on around here," he says.

Datema thinks that sports involvement is "a great activity" for Christians. "All the sports are good for fellowship." Through sports, Christians "can demonstrate our Christian attitude and sportsmanlike approach."

Soccer and golf

In Classis Hamilton there is a league of four or five hockey teams connected with local Christian Reformed churches. Mostly boys and men are involved with the hockey, says regional pastor John Zantingh.

Classis Hamilton also has a baseball league with teams for both boys and girls. Local church baseball and hockey teams sometimes compete with teams from other parts of Ontario.

In the summer, soccer is popular in the area. Mostly men play on the soccer teams — often the same ones who play hockey in winter, says Zantingh.

Sometimes, golf tournaments are also organized in Hamilton. Recently, a golf tournament was held to raise funds for a local Christian school, reports Zantingh.

Sports is "a healthy aspect" of church involvement and is good for fellowship, according to him. Zantingh is pastor of Immanuel CRC in Hamilton, which has baseball, hockey and soccer teams.

Some do, some don't

Classis Niagara has five CRC hockey teams (out of a total of nine) involved with the Central Niagara Christian Hockey League, says Ed Slappendel, who schedules games for the league. Slappendel also plays hockey with the Fenwick Flames.

Players on Classis Niagara's hockey teams are all male, from 16 to 40 years old. Baseball and volleyball are also popular in Classis Niagara, and there is a separate women's league for both sports.

In contrast with other classes in Ontario, churches in Classis Toronto do not have a lot of sports teams, says Rev. John Tenyenhuis, stated clerk for the classis. "We tend not to have competitive sports," he says. "I have a mixed reaction to competitiveness." But Tenyenhuis admits that "sports is a good thing. I think healing comes through physical things and it encourages fellowship."

Emphasize fun

Church sports teams in Classis Quinte put the emphasis on fun rather than competition, according to regional pastor Rev. Bernard Bakker. Local Christian Reformed churches do not sponsor hockey teams, but many young adults from the churches have formed their own teams, he says. There are no hockey tournaments in the area. "It's all recreational," explains Bakker.

Baseball is popular in the Quinte area and there is an interdenominational men's slo-pitch league in which some CRC people play, says Bakker. There is also a women's slo-pitch league. "The baseball is competitive," says Bakker. "There are several tournaments throughout the year."

Bakker enjoys playing baseball and used to be in the men's league. Sports involvement is definitely good for Christians for fellowship and is "a good way of getting people on the fringes involved," according to Bakker. "You can invite your unchurched friends." Sports involvement by Christians also allows them to see people from church in a different setting, he says.

For our Calendar of Events, please turn to page 18.

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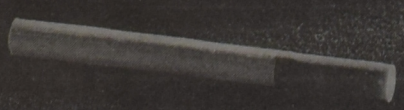

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Book Review

African missionaries can't ignore politics

Media/Arts

Silence is consent re: corrupt governments

Christianity and Politics in Doe's Liberia

by Paul Gifford. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Hardcover, L40 ($87 Cdn.) Reviewed by Jan H. Boer, who teaches at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, Jos, Nigeria, under the auspices of Christian Reformed World Missions.

If this book were only about Liberia, a remote country for most of us, I would hardly recommend it, let alone review it. However, the problems described are similar to those in many other black African countries. This is a "must" read for anyone interested in missions in Africa in general. And since many readers belong to the Christian Reformed Church, which has spent much energy, prayer and money on missions to Africa, this book should be of interest to many members — in spite of its stiff price.

We have here an analysis of "the socio-political function of Christianity in Liberia under the corrupt and oppressive regime of Samuel K. Doe." The flyleaf tells us:

Gifford shows that, in general, Liberian Christianity — far from being a force for justice and human advancement — diverted attention from the cause of Liberia's ills, left change to God's miraculous intervention, encouraged obedience and acceptance of the status quo, and thus served to entrench Doe's power. This Christianity, devised in the U.S.A. and promoted largely by American missionaries, thus had the effect of furthering the regional economic and political objectives of the U.S. government, which was committed to supporting Doe.

That's hard-hitting language, but an accurate summary.

Spiritualizing problems

Mainline churches failed to advance social justice because their leaders were also leaders in the corrupt political system. Evangelicals, independents, charismatics and "health and wealth" gospeleers failed to promote justice, because they spiritualized all problems. The causes of poverty, injustice and corruption were identified with the devil, while political and economic causes were dismissed as irrelevant.

While mainliners participated in politics in the wrong way, the others insisted on being apolitical. Their mission was to fight the devil but keep out of politics. This was a bankrupt form of spiritual warfare that recognized no causes except the spiritual and therefore did nothing about these causes. Their "theology" diverted their attention away from society's realities.

However, this attitude did not take them out of politics so much as it drove them to a passive politics that supported the status quo. In others words, an apolitical stand translated into a corrupt politics. "No vote," wrote a Christian sociologist, ends up being a "'No' vote," a vote against change.

During the course of his argument, Gifford provides us with a very concrete overview of political corruption — almost a brief textbook on the subject. He also presents a fine introduction to the "health and wealth" version of the gospel — almost a "who's who." He gives an excellent concrete summary of fundamentalism as well. And the all-pervasive influence of American fundamentalism is so well detailed that one almost shudders.

CRC missionaries not exempt

CRC missionaries also get considerable attention. I am flattered that the author does not classify them as fundamentalistic. He has some good words to say about them. He calls them "highly professional" and appreciatively quotes from their publications. He refers to the Back To God Hour as "sophisticated."

However, I am sad to note that Gifford does not clear them from the rest of the problems he describes. He regards CRC missionaries as basically sharing the same perspective on religion and politics as the other evangelicals. As a Christian Reformed missionary myself, I find this highly embarrassing.

Christian Reformed readers of this review may well wish to raise some serious questions in the appropriate places. They will, I trust, receive satisfactory answers.

This book shows the impossibility of separating missions and politics. The pretention of being apolitical leads to wrong politics, support of the existing order. Reformed people, including their missionaries, ought to know better than that. We affirm the reality of spiritual warfare and have long been aware of it in terms of "antithesis." However, the Reformed version of spiritual warfare has always driven us *into* politics, not out of it.

Read and accept the challenge for the sake of Reformed missions to Africa. May the charge of African Christians that many missions have shortchanged them with a truncated apolitical gospel never be levelled at us!

Survey shows women and those over 30 buy the most books

Marian Van Til

TORONTO — At the recent annual gathering of the Canadian Book Publishers Council the group released the results of a reading survey it had commissioned. The survey, conducted by Market Facts of Canada Ltd., confirmed what most publishers already know: that women buy more books than men do. Among other conclusions: baby boomers are more likely to spend money on books than is the younger "Generation X" and low- and middle-income households buy more books than high-income households do.

The survey contacted 4,100 "anglophone households representative of the anglophone national population; 64.4 of those responded.

Sixty-one per cent of the 1,183 women who replied had bought 12 or more books in the past six months. Only 39 per cent of the 1,458 men who replied bought 12 or more books in a half-year.

When men and women are considered together, nearly half (47 per cent) of those between 30 and 49 years old are "avid book buyers." Only a quarter (24 per cent) of people aged 18 to 29 describe themselves that way.

Two other interesting finds: 88 per cent of people buy books for themselves rather than as gifts, and of those books, 51 per cent are fiction, 38 per cent are non-fiction and 11 per cent are children's books. And people in the $20,000-$59,999 household income range buy more books than those with household incomes of $60,000 or more.

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Church

Australian Presbyterians affirm direction

SYDNEY, (REC) — As the triennial meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (PCA) last fall at least three orthodox Reformed ethical and theological positions were affirmed.

The assembly declared that a practicing homosexual will find liberation from this lifestyle in Christ.

The assembly declared its support for the *Westminster Confession* by noting that its own "Declaration Statement" from 1901 "does not substantially alter or nullify the distinctive Reformed doctrine taught in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*." The assembly emphasized especially the question of God's sovereignty. It further pointed out that officers of the church who thought the "Declaratory Statement" undermined the *Confession* should not sign the formula for officebearers.

The assembly declared that a practicing homosexual will find liberation from this lifestyle in Christ. It said that homosexual practice is a sin. "The family ought not to be redefined so as to permit homosexual marriage or to permit homosexual couples to adopt or to foster children."

"Abortion is always unacceptable," the assembly declared, "except when at least two competent medical authorities deem the abortion essential to save the life of the mother when that is threatened with immediate death should the pregnancy continue." Abortion as a means of birth control was clearly rejected.

The PCA also decided to examine the biblical mandates for diaconal ministry. A committee will report to the next assembly in 1977. The assembly voted not to re-open the issue of the ordination of women. At the 1991 assembly, the PCA ended its practice of ordaining women to the ministry, and this assembly considered an appeal of that decision.

Southern Sudan should be an independent republic, the assembly felt, and requested the Australian government to work for that goal. The PCA also expressed itself on the Australian discussion about whether the country should retain a constitutional monarchy. They said Scripture does not require Christians to support either this or a republican form of government.

Papyrus scraps of Matthew threaten liberal theories

BERLIN, Germany (EP) — Scraps of an early copy of the Gospel of Matthew have been dated to the first century A.D., throwing doubt on liberal Bible theories which maintain that the book was written in the second century.

In an article prepared for the German *Journal for Papyrology and Epigraphics, scholar and papyrologist Carsten Thiede dates the papyrus fragments to 75-100 A.D. The fragments, which are in the Magdalen College's library at Oxford University, had been dated at 200 A.D., but Thiede argues that the style and script used in the fragments clearly dates them a century earlier.*

Thiede's dating directly contradicts the popular "Q document" hypothesis, which states that the gospels were plagiarized from a common document. Since the fragments in question would be copies of an earlier document, their early date supports the traditional view that the gospel account itself is an eyewitness account of the life of Christ.

The fragments are part of Matthew 26, the story of Christ's resurrection. Thiede notes that in the scraps, the name of Christ is abbreviated in the same way Jews abbreviated the name of God in the Old Testament. This suggests that first-century Christians believed in the resurrection of Christ and in His deity. Liberal scholars have argued that belief in the deity of Christ was developed long after the death of Christ, in the late second century or as late as the early fourth century.

Reformed Ecumenical Council solicits logo for historic gathering in '96

Marian Van Til

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — The Reformed Ecumenical Council meets every four years, and those meetings have been held virtually all over the world. The next such gathering of REC's member Reformed denominations, including representatives of the Christian Reformed Church, will be held in the council's "hometown," Grand Rapids, Michigan, in June 1996.

Theme of "Rejoice in the Lord"

That meeting will commemorate the 50th year of the organization (which until 1988 was called Reformed Ecumenical Synod). "Rejoice in the Lord" will be the 50th anniversary theme, "to celebrate and give thanks for God's help for 50 years, and to rejoice in our future," says REC in a news release. The theme takes its biblical inspiration from Philippians 4 and Psalm 90.

REC is soliciting a logo to symbolize that theme and is offering $50 to the winning entry. The winning logo will appear on all 1996 assembly art and literature, but all entries will be displayed at the assembly.

Anyone interested may submit a design, which should include "a sentence or two of explanation of why you chose the elements in your design," says REC. The deadline is May 1, 1995. Send entries to: The Reformed Ecumenical Council, 2017 Eastern Ave., S.E., Suite 201, Grand Rapids, MI 49507.

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Catholics are largest denominational group in U.S. Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Roman Catholics make up the single largest denominational group in the new Congress, according to a new survey of congressional religious affiliations. Catholic representation in the House and Senate increased by seven, climbing to 148 in the 104th Congress. Various Baptist groups have 65 in Congress, United Methodists account for 63, Presbyterians have 62, and Episcopalians come in next with 49.

Among other religious groups, 34 members of Congress are Jewish, 22 Lutheran, 20 identify themselves as "Protestant," and there are 13 members each for the Mormon church and for the United Church of Christ. Six identified themselves as "Christian," five as Unitarian-Universalist, five Eastern Orthodox, four Christian Science, three Assemblies of God, three African Methodist Episcopal Zion, and two Seventh-day Adventist.

Religious groups who have just one member include the United Brethren in Christ, the Pan-African Orthodox Christian, the Church of the Nazarene, Evangelical Covenant Church, and the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Four members of Congress did not specify a religion, and one was identified simply as "independent."

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Good habits may save us some day

Laura Smit

CHAPTER & VERSE

"For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead" (James 2:26).

Lent is an uncomfortable season for many Protestants of my acquaintance. How can 40 days of sacrifice be reconciled with the affirmation of salvation by grace through faith alone? Isn't it better not to worry so much about actions? Isn't this season of self-denial just an exercise in "works righteousness"?

I don't find it quite so easy to separate faith and works. It is in my actions that I discover what I truly believe, and it is through my actions that I may be able to shape what I believe. All of us know the experience of nurturing a grudge, or choosing to believe the worst about someone else, or deciding to offer forgiveness to someone who has hurt us. All of these mental decisions are reinforced and made real by how we behave. Why should faith be any different?

Savoring anger

In Anthony Trollope's *The Last Chronicle of Barset,* Archdeacon Grantly, a prominent clergyman and wealthy landowner, has a fight with his son Henry over Henry's proposed marriage. When Henry writes to his mother to announce that he intends to marry the woman he loves, despite his father's disapproval, the archdeacon directs his wife to write back and inform their son that if he goes through with such a marriage he will be disinherited. Mrs. Grantly declines, insisting that she will not write until her husband's wrath has had time to cool, lest she commit to writing something he might later regret.

Wasted anger

"The archdeacon was by no means satisfied; but he knew his wife too well, and himself too well, and the world too well, to insist on the immediate gratification of his passion.... His anger at the present moment was very hot — so hot that he wished to wreak it. He knew that it would cool before the morrow; and, no doubt, knew also theoretically, that it would be most fitting that it should be cool. But not the less was it a matter of regret to him that so much good hot anger should be wasted, and that he could not have his will of his disobedient son while it lasted. He might, no doubt, have written himself, but to have done so would not have suited him. Even in his anger he could not have written to his son without using the ordinary terms of affection, and in his anger he could not bring himself to use those terms.... Then he remembered that the evening would come, and that he would say his prayers; and he shook his head in regret — in a regret of which he was only half conscious, though it was very keen, and which he did not attempt to analyse — as he reflected that his rage would hardly be able to survive that ordeal. How common with us it is to repine that the devil is not stronger over us than he is [p.333]."

If the archdeacon is to hold on to his anger, there are actions he does not dare attempt. He does not dare to put the words "Dear Henry" to paper. He fears to face his evening prayers. If he is not vigilant, habits of tenderness toward his son may undermine his anger and lead him to capitulate.

Even as he threatens to disinherit his son, he admits to himself that the habit of generosity is too strong, that he will never really take such a step. Ultimately, the archdeacon's opposition to his son is overcome when he is brought face to face with the young lady whom Henry wishes to marry.

Cultivating spiritual habits

As a gentleman, the archdeacon cannot bring himself to be rude or severe with a lady. The habit of courtesy, stronger even than his habit of generous kindness to his children, conquers him at last. He has loved his son all along; it is these habits of active kindness which have kept that love alive in the face of anger.

It seems to me that the giving up or taking on of some particular activity for 40 days is a way to cultivate habits of spiritual courtesy, tenderness and generosity, habits which may save us from temptation despite ourselves. We choose to nurture our love for God, rather than nurturing our angry rebellion against him, by habitual actions of love and worship.

Laura Smit is pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Clayton, N.J.

Jewish-Catholic relations strained during anniversary commemoration

BIRKENAU, Poland (EP) — Pope John Paul honored those who lost their lives at Auschwitz prison camp 50 years ago during a regular Sunday morning address from St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City.

The pope condemned anti-Semitism and the "arrogance of nationalism," Jan. 29, and called to Christians around the world to pray and work to prevent "other modern-day Auschwitzes." He said that the anniversary brought back memories of "one of the darkest and most tragic hours of history."

In Poland, a controversy among Jewish groups marred the anniversary. Leaders of several groups complained that the "ecumenical" commemorations failed to respect the fact that the victims were overwhelmingly Jewish.

A service held at the site of the former concentration camp included a recital of Kadish, the Jewish prayer for the dead, by Poland's Chief Rabbi, Menachem Joskowicz, followed by a meditation by the local Roman Catholic bishop. Representatives from Poland's Orthodox, Lutheran and Muslim minorities also read prayers at the ceremony.

'Christianizing' the Holocaust?

At a private prayer meeting at Birkenau's Holocaust Memorial, the head of the European Jewish Congress, Jean Kahn, said that Jewish organizations would continue to resist efforts to "Christianize the Holocaust by the Catholic Church."

New York Orthodox rabbi Abraham Weiss, whose eviction from a former Carmelite convent at Auschwitz in 1989 caused a deterioration in Christian-Jewish relations, marked the anniversary by picketing a Roman Catholic church close to the Birkenau perimeter fence.

In connection with the anniversary of the liberation of the former concentration camp, a new book about Carl Goerdeler reveals how his Christian faith led him in his fight against Adolf Hitler and National Socialism.

On Feb. 2, 1945, Goerdeler, the civilian leader of the German resistance against Hitler, was executed. He would have become Germany's chancellor if the 1944 coup attempt had been successful. In the book, *The Fabricated Luther* (Concordia Publishing House, 1995), it is revealed that Goerdeler, a Lutheran of Jewish descent, visited London, Paris, Washington, and other major cities to plead with political leaders to stand firm against Hitler. He stressed to leaders that Hitler was in reality a nationalistic Boshevik who intended to liquidate first the Jews, then Christianity, and ultimately capitalism.

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Feature

Caught in the Nazi net [1]

A Jewish family hides in the Nazi-occupied Netherlands

Mandy R. Evans

January 6, 1943, Amsterdam,

His forehead pressed against the windowpane, Nan watched the people and traffic in the street below.

It was cold. The street and the sidewalk were covered with slush from previously fallen snow. A sharp north wind was blowing, keeping the bicycle riders barely in their seats. Those heading south had the wind at their backs and scarcely needed to pedal. Those going north were bent over, barely able to move their bikes against the blistering wind. It was sort of fun to watch them.

It was January 6 — the Feast of the Three Wisemen — and most Catholics were taking the day off, which was probably the reason the street wasn't quite as busy as usual.

Nan wished he could go out for a moment to get some fresh air. He had not been outside since he had joined Mama and Papa after leaving Oldenzaal in October. He knew he couldn't complain, that he should be grateful to be alive. Many of his friends had not been that lucky. Still he felt frustrated. It wasn't easy to be caged like an animal, day after long, boring day.

He had read practically every book and magazine in the house, some of them twice. But he realized that going outside was out of the question. German restrictions had become tighter by the day and raids across the city were part of the daily order.

His eyes followed the streetcars as they rolled up and down the wide street. In the direction of the Munt Tower, his eyes rested briefly on the large department store of Vroom and Dreesman and the huge golden letters on its storefront. He tried to recall how long it had been since he had wandered through the store. He used to spend hours in the toy department picking and choosing until he had found just the right kit for his woodworking projects.

An idea popped into his mind. What if he would ask Mama to let him go to the store to buy a kit? It would keep him busy for days. He was not at all surprised when she at first refused, but he was not going to give up that easily.

"It's just across the street. I should be back in twenty minutes." She had noticed his weariness, and she had worried a lot about him lately. Unable to resist the sad look in his eyes any longer, she finally gave in.

"Please be careful," she pleaded.

"I promise. I'll be right back. You'll see."

He gave her a hurried peck on the cheek, grabbed his coat, and quickly walked out of the room, afraid she'd change her mind. Carefully, he went down the four flights of stairs, hoping that he wouldn't meet anybody. This was the hardest part. When he shut the heavy front door behind him, he stopped for a second to draw a deep breath of fresh air. Feeling happy and exhilarated, he crossed the street in the direction of the department store. Occasionally he glanced in some of the store windows along the way, without stopping or slowing down.

People were quietly sliding by, their heads bent to protect themselves from the icy wind. No one was paying any attention to him. Mama's worries had been unfounded. She was a worrier by nature and he doubted if she'd ever change.

The sound of a motorcycle pulling up along the sidewalk beside him made him turn his head. The bike had come to a halt. Instinctively, he began to walk a little faster, but he did hear the question.

"Are you Manus Wijnperle's son?"

This question was to become branded into his mind for the rest of his life. His body stiffened, but he kept walking.

"Stop! Turn around!"

Hesitantly he complied and looked into the pale eyes of a man dressed in a long brown leather coat. Someone else, dressed identically, was seated in the sidecar. The man who had asked the question came walking slowly toward him, carefully removing his large brown leather gloves. He stood so close that Nan could feel and smell the man's foul breath.

"You haven't answered me. Are you Manus Wijnperle's son?"

C.C. FILES

The author's parents' engagement picture.

"Yes." His reply was almost inaudible.

"I thought so." A smile crossed the man's lips. There had never been any doubt in his mind; the boy's resemblance to his father was unmistakable.

"It isn't very wise for you Jews to lie but you know that of course," the man continued sarcastically. Again there was that scornful smile.

Nan nodded.

"My name is Abraham Puls. Your father and I have known each other for quite a long time."

At the mention of the name, flashes of stories began to cross Nan's mind. Yes, he had heard about Abraham Puls, the small-time operator of an unprofitable moving business. He had spent a lot of time in the ghetto where Papa had had his warehouse. Too poor to buy tires for his old truck, he had come to Papa, who was the only one who would extend him credit. When the Germans had walked into Holland, Puls had immediately recognized the opportunity to improve his miserable lifestyle and had offered his services to the enemy. After all, he knew where many of the Jews were living. According to the German orders, he would move the belongings of those who had been transported to concentration camps to Germany, but not until he had first removed any valuable objects for himself. The real money, however, was in finding hidden Jews, for which he was being paid "per head." Officially, he had no authority to make arrests, but that was only a minor problem and very easily solved. The Germans teamed him up with a Dutch policeman by the name of Meyer, also a Nazi sympathizer, so the two of them would drive around the city looking for innocent victims. It was this team that made January 6, 1943, the most remembered day in our lives.

Meyer had gotten out of the sidecar to join his partner. Puls started to put his gloves back on in the same deliberate manner

Continued on page 13...

Russian Orthodoxy: *The last Soviet holdover?*

Lawrence A. Uzzell

Four years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, many observers believe the Russian Orthodox Church remains one of Russia's most Soviet institutions.

Despite lively growth in Orthodox parachurch schools, colleges, and charitable programs for the poor, the church's top leaders are still the same bishops who collaborated with the KGB during the Soviet era. Often, these leaders, such as Metropolitan Ioann of St. Petersburg, are openly allied with ultra-nationalists who seek the forcible suppression of non-Russian political, cultural and economic influences.

Many conservative church leaders appear to still be implementing Soviet-style tactics of fear and oppression to clamp down on any dissenting thought — whether inside or outside of the church.

News Network International (NNI) [the Christian news agency for which the author wrote this article] has frequently asked knowledgeable Russians — both believers and unbelievers — whether the newer Orthodox bishops appointed since 1991 are any more reform-oriented than their senior colleagues.

Enslaved and enslaving

Is there an evolutionary self-cleansing of the church as its older, Soviet-era bishops gradually retire?

Almost unanimously, the answer has come back "no." Some, such as a regional newspaper editor in Vologda, 300 miles north of Moscow, even say that the situation inside the church is getting worse.

One pro-reform Orthodox priest told NNI that the legacy of the Soviet era includes a widespread "slave mentality," which causes many clergy and laity to resist their own liberation. Likening the current situation to the Israelites' revolt against Moses after their escape from Egypt, this priest said that intolerance is actually growing as Russians face the insecurity of freedom.

Even a staff member for the Patriarch of Moscow agreed that the majority of today's Russian Orthodox clergy can fairly be described as xenophobic and anti-Semitic.

Indeed, one of the greatest concerns for church observers is the increasing alignment of many Orthodox leaders with the repressive elements of Russian society.

The Orthodox tradition provides a wealth of symbols to a society yearning for a unifying ideology to replace discredited Marxism. However, so far, opponents of political and economic reform on both the neo-Bolshevik left and the ultra-nationalist right have put more effort than the reformers at tapping into this tradition.

Double standard

When NNI interviewed reformist politicians Yegor Gaidar and Boris Fedorov, they did not once invoke Russia's Orthodox heritage as an inspiration to common effort. But Communist Party leader Gennady Zuganov went out of his way to emphasize the importance of protecting Russia's unique spiritual traditions — conveniently ignoring the role his own party played for 70 years trying to crush those traditions.

It is not unusual to see Orthodox banners and icons at political rallies denouncing reforms. The reaction of the church's top leadership has been to crack down selectively on just one Orthodox political activist: Russia's leading voice for religious freedom, Father Gleb Yakunin.

WCC PHOTO: PETER WILLIAMS

Baptism at the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Cathedral in St. Petersburg.

While tacitly accepting the political roles of clergy such as Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk, leader of the church in Belarus and a member of that country's parliament, the Moscow Patriarchate ordered former prisoner of conscience Yakunin to drop out of the 1993 election campaign as a pro-reform candidate for a parliamentary seat in Russia.

When Yakunin refused, the Patriarchate announced that he was being defrocked as an Orthodox priest. A council of the church's top bishops in late 1994 threatened that if Yakunin — now a sitting member of the parliament — persists in his defiance, he will be excommunicated.

No such threat has been issued against Metropolitan Ioann or other Orthodox clerics whose parishes openly distribute ultra-nationalist political tracts such as a notorious anti-Semitic forgery called "Protocols of the Elders of Zion."

Church-state alliances

The same council also continued support of the growing tendency for Orthodoxy to seek special status as a quasi-established church, violating the Russian Constitution's guarantees of separation of church and state.

Many Orthodox leaders have been active in the legislative battles to change Russia's 1990 law on the freedom of conscience in ways that will give benefits to the Orthodox Church while establishing more regulations for religious minorities.

And while the legal debates continue, some church leaders have already begun joint partnerships with the state. For example, the Patriarch and his top bishops have enthusiastically allied themselves with Moscow's anti-reform city government in the campaign to rebuild (largely through taxes) the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, described by one dissident as "a monument to the ego of [Moscow Mayor] Yuri Luzhkov."

This 19th century cathedral was one of the largest churches in the world. Dedicated as a monument to Russia's victory over Napoleon in 1812, it took decades to complete, only to be demolished in a few days by Stalin's wrecking crews. Luzhkov, known for his habit of launching grandiose urban renewal projects with little thought about how to pay for them, has made the cathedral's reconstruction a top priority.

Priorities

While the building has historic and artistic significance, critics of the mayor's plan point out that there are still only about 15,000 functioning Orthodox churches in the entire territory of the former Soviet Union, as compared with more than 50,000 before the 1917 Bolshevik coup. Many believers, especially east of the Ural Mountains, live literally hundreds of miles from the nearest working church.

If the primary purpose of church buildings is to service the faithful rather than the government, critics ask how the Patriarchate can justify spending both its own and the taxpayers' scarce resources on a multi-trillion-ruble project in what is now a largely commercial neighborhood.

Stung by such criticism, the Patriarchate released a statement in December declaring that the government funds earmarked for this project are not being transferred from programs for the poor, handicapped, elderly, and that if they were, "the church itself would not agree with such a decision."

Critics responded by pointing out that every ruble spent on Luzhkov's project is a ruble not available for other goals.

The Moscow cathedral also raises the issue of the state's neutrality between the Orthodox church and other religious bodies. Examples like England show that it may be possible for a country to have an officially established church while at the same time protecting the rights of minority religions. However, Russia claims to have chosen the option of disestablishment, formally enshrining this principle in its 1993 constitution.

If only the Orthodox Church is going to enjoy government subsidies it would appear that the new constitution's language is merely rhetoric.

Just rhetoric?

Representatives of the Patriarchate have responded that many countries provide government subsidies for the restoration of churches which are historical or architectural landmarks.

This point would be more convincing if the government were not dragging its heels in restoring to their pre-Soviet owners non-Orthodox church buildings such as Moscow's Anglican Church of St. Andrew, and if the Russian armed forces had not signed a concordat pledging special co-operation with the Orthodox Church, without extending any such agreement to other confessions.

Also part of the pattern is the Patriarchate's behind-the-scenes pressure to keep the Kremlin off-limits to meetings or worship services sponsored by any religious groups other than the Orthodox.

Continued on page 12...

Feature

Russian Orthodoxy: *The last Soviet holdover?*

...continued from page 11

When NNI asked one of the Patriarchate's political allies, parliamentary deputy Viktor Aksuchits, how he justifies such an apparently discriminatory policy, he replied that the Kremlin is historically not just a political, but a religious centre. Kremlin churches such as the Cathedral of the Assumption are to Russian Orthodox what the churches of Vatican City are to Roman Catholics, he said.

Many Protestants are not seeking to use these historic churches, but rather, some of the other buildings erected during the Soviet era, and only on the same basis as these buildings are rented out to other groups of citizens for cultural or educational gatherings. However, Aksuchits told NNI this makes no difference in the policy.

Not fond of foreign missionaries

The Patriarchate's efforts to carve out a privileged position for Orthodoxy are also apparent in its continued lobbying to regulate foreign religious missionaries. The fall 1994 council specifically called on the parliament to fill the "legislative vacuum" on the "professional religious activities" of foreign citizens in Russia.

According to the Patriarchate's press release summarizing the council, "It is necessary especially to make it clear to the leaders of international Christian organizations that the proselytizing activities of foreign missionaries in Russia and other [Commonwealth of Independent States] countries compromise the very idea of ecumenical fellowship and joint witness."

Charges of heresy

For some, even Western charitable aid creates suspicions. In mid-November, Moscow's Danilovsky Monastery, which houses the Patriarchate's administrative headquarters, hosted a conference on "The Unity of the Church," whose main purpose was to lay the groundwork for a campaign to defrock two reform-oriented priests, Fathers Alexander Borisov and Georgi Kochetkov. (See profile.)

Several participants, such as Deacon Clement of the Trinity-Sergei Monastery, openly accused the two priests of "heresy."

What constitutes heresy from an Orthodox standpoint is, of course, an internal issue for the church itself to decide; it is not an issue of religious freedom unless the church seeks to have heretics punished by the secular government.

But when contact with Western Christians merely for co-operation in humanitarian projects is treated as evidence of heresy, observers are forced to conclude that influential figures within the Russian Orthodox Church are not willing to extend even the minimum of tolerance and good will necessary for a free society.

WCC PHOTO: PETER WILLIAMS

The Trinity cathedral at St. Sergy Lavra (monastery) in Zagorsk, 80 km. north of Moscow.

In his comments, Deacon Clement raised questions about how Borisov's Church of Saints Cosmas and Damian in downtown Moscow was able to gather the resources needed to run its many humanitarian projects. "It would be interesting to know: From where does this small parish get such colossal sums?" Clement asked. "Usually, today's parish priests do not know how to make ends meet under current economic conditions. It is obvious that these parishes have very strong support, and the support precisely of those forces which wish nothing good for our church."

Growing internal struggles

In reality, Borisov's parish does not bear all — or even most — of the financial burden of running the state-affiliated Russian Children's Hospital, but simply helps out as best it can in recruiting blood donors, raising funds to buy medicine and conducting worship services in the hospital auditorium.

Aside from the gross distortion of the facts, Clement's reasoning demonstrates an almost Stalinist paranoia about contacts with foreigners. By the deacon's standards, the only way an Orthodox parish could free itself from the suspicion of disloyalty would be to cut every link to the West — no matter what the resulting effects on needy Russians.

Fortunately, Patriarch Aleksy II himself has yet to publicly embrace such reasoning. The Patriarchate has still not formally commented on the November conference.

But observers note a growing internal struggle within the Orthodox church between the reactionaries and the reformers. For the time being, it seems that the Patriarch is trying to walk a tightrope between the two wings. Whether he can continue to do so without falling off, however, remains to be seen.

Writer Lawrence A. Uzzell is based in Moscow, where he wrote this article on special assignment from News Network International (NNI).

Profile

Russian reform priest faces opposition from Orthodox leadership

Father Alexander Borisov called 'too Protestant'

Lawrence A. Uzzell

For the past several months, Father Alexander Borisov has faced increasing opposition from members of the conservative wing of his own Russian Orthodox Church, who allege that the prominent priest is "too Protestant."

Now, after a period of silence, some observers fear the Moscow Patriarchate may have fired the first shot in an open war between the church hierarchy and Borisov's Church of Saints Cosmas and Damian in Moscow.

On Jan. 17, one of the three priests in Borisov's parish was moved to take a teaching position at an Orthodox university. According to one source close to the scene, the Orthodox hierarchy may now replace the priest with someone more hardline who can be used to "explode [Borisov's] church from inside."

Borisov acknowledged to NNI that what happens next may depend on how he responds. Will he struggle, or will he allow himself to be humiliated?

'Ecumenical a dirty word'

Actions against Borisov began in November, during a Russian Orthodox conference called "The Unity of the Church." At the conference, Orthodox church leaders expressed a desire to defrock two pro-reform priests, Borisov and Father Georgi Kochetkov. The priests are accused of being "ecumenical" because of their openness to Christians of non-Orthodox faiths.

Borisov, who is president of the Russian Bible Society, has many contacts with Western groups and is known for his good relationships with several Protestant leaders. He was a disciple and friend of the late Father Alexander Menn, a dissident priest and emerging spiritual leader who was brutally murdered in 1990.

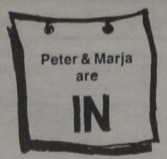
Borisov has offended many church leaders by challenging several Orthodox traditions. In his book *The Fields are Ripe*, Borisov advocated preaching the New Testament gospels and epistles in modern Russian language instead of Old Church Slavonic in order to make the liturgy more accessible to newcomers. And he urged less emphasis on the veneration of Mary and the icons. Such views have earned him the "too Protestant" label.

Borisov was condemned at the November meeting, and accusations against him were repeated in the mass media. Members of his parish issued an open letter defending him.

The embattled priest asserted that leadership within the Russian Orthodox Church is "full of hatred toward Christians of other denominations. They hate people who are different from them."

And Borisov told NNI that calling him an "ecumenical" is indeed accurate. "We consider Christians of other denominations to be our brothers," he said, adding that his Orthodox opponents "consider them enemies."

Observers are watching Borisov's fate closely, seeing the situation as a key signal of where the Russian Orthodox Church may be headed in the future.



How did sin originate?

Dear P & M:

We would like your ideas about the origin of sin. God created us and all things good and perfect. If all things are under God's almighty control, how then, and from where, did sin originate?

Dear Origin of Sin:

God created the potential for evil when he gave decision-making ability first to the angels and then to us. Therefore the origin of sin is rooted in choice: to obey or to disobey.

The Bible does not tell us much about the original Fall in heaven. Jude tells us that there were angels who "did not keep their positions of authority but *abandoned* their own home" (:6 — our italics). Peter tells us that "God did not spare angels when they *sinned,* but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment" (2 Peter 2:4). Other references to the devil and to demons show them to be in constant opposition to God.

Humankind's fall into sin is described in much greater detail. But it comes down to the same thing. Adam and Eve were given a choice and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was representative of that choice. Seduced by the serpent they *chose* to disobey God; as a consequence they entered the bondage of sin.

God certainly took a risk when he gave the angels and humanity the capacity to choose. But the alternative would have been to create robots programmed to love him. What kind of love would that have been? When you contemplate your own human relationships you will quickly conclude that there is a world of difference between forced love and a love that is freely given.

God defines himself as "love" (1 John 4:8), which he showed by freely offering his Son. Once again he gives us the choice to accept or reject his solution to sin.

All our thinking and explaining will not remove the mystery surrounding the origin of sin. We are left with the misery of wills once free, now enslaved. But we are also left with the knowledge that sin was overcome when Jesus Christ chose to obey and do his Father's will. That's how God retained his almighty control. That's where our freedom now lies. That's why God will forever be glorified!

Dear P & M:

The rise-shine-and-fade-away syndrome which we so often see around us in countries and businesses seems also to apply to churches. Why, when Christ is the King of the Church?

Dear Churches That Come and Go:

Churches are human responses and human communities, fellowships of fallen sinners. Churches are gatherings of people who exercise their freedom to choose in ways that glorify or demean God. Your observations have to do with the institutional church — the church that is visible to us.

The Church of Christ is the invisible body that is known to the Father. Throughout the ages he has been able to look at the world and see his family, those true believers who sincerely love him and confess his Son as their Savior.

Now let's answer your question directly. We do not confess that Christ is King of denominations or churches. We confess that Christ is head of his Body, the Church. We trust that you sense the subtle but huge difference between these two statements.

Of this you can be certain: denominations and congregations may come and go, but the Church of Christ will stand forever. That's the distinction that Nikolai Grundtvig made in 1854 in his hymn "Built On the Rock" when he wrote: "Built on the Rock, the Church shall stand, even when steeples are falling" (CRC *Psalter Hymnal,* #503).

Write to: P & M
c/o *Christian Courier*
4-261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

Caught in the Nazi net [1]

...continued from page 10

as he had taken them off. "We've got him. Let's go and find the rest of them," he said, never letting his eyes leave his victim's face.

They parked the motorbike on the sidewalk and with Nan between them, they walked the short distance to the Singel where they took him into a small dimply lit ground-floor office. It was sparingly furnished with a desk, a couple of kitchen chairs, and a telephone.

"Sit down!" Meyer ordered, as he pushed Nan in the direction of the chair next to the desk. Puls seated himself behind the desk and reached for the telephone. Nan's eyes quickly wandered around the room. Meyer sat in a corner, leafing through some papers. Then his eyes fell on the door: it was ajar. For a split second, he considered his odds. It was his only chance.

He lurched toward the door and ran out into the street. Gasping, his heart throbbing, stumbling at times, he ran into an alley connecting the Singel with the Kalverstraat, with Puls and Meyer in pursuit.

"Stop!" He heard their shouts, but he kept running.

"Stop that Jew!" Puls yelled.

Someone jumped in front of him. He tripped and fell to the ground.

"Please, please, let me go, please?" When he looked up, there was a grin on the stranger's face.

"Thank you, we'll take it from here." It was Puls's voice. A small crowd had gathered. Someone jerked him to his feet. It was a policeman. "N.S.B.er-traitor!" Nan thought.

"Remove his belt!" Puls ordered. Meyer pulled the belt out of the loops of Nan's pants. He had lost a lot of weight in the last year, and he had to hold onto his trousers so as not to lose them. He had never felt so humiliated. He trembled. He could hear some of the spectators laugh and tears of rage sprang into his eyes.

"Let's go and visit the rest of your family!" Puls said, grabbing his victim by the arm. Silently the small party started out toward the Rokin. The policeman, no longer needed, stayed behind.

They walked Nan straight to the building and up the stairs. Nan realized that he had been followed from the moment he had left the house that morning.

Mama was helping Tante Annie clean off the breakfast table. Papa and Oom Piet had gone down to the cellar early that morning to repair the furnace. Except for the clatter of dishes, it was strangely quiet around the house. A few times Mama had walked over to the window. Almost an hour had passed since Nan had left and he had not yet returned. She was worried. "He probably has forgotten all about the time," she tried to calm herself; after all, he was still a boy, and she knew he liked to roam through the store.

Suddenly she heard unusually heavy footsteps coming up the stairs. Heavy — like boots. Her heart skipped. Tante Annie came running from the kitchen.

"Who do you think it is?" she asked, drying her hands on her apron.

"I don't know."

The footsteps were coming closer. The living room door flew open and in horror the women watched as two men dragged Nan into the living room.

"Oh no, dear God no!" Mama cried. Then she collapsed.

Mandy Evans tells the story of her own family in her book Lest We Forget. *She moved to Canada in 1959 and to the United States in 1971. Reprinted with permission.*

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(Revised February 1, 1995)

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Births

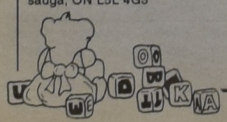
BEUNK:

Andrew and Kim have been truly blessed by the Father above, for we have been given a precious baby girl to love.

COLLEEN JOHANNA

arrived on Feb. 21, 1995, at 2 a.m. Very proud grandparents are Jake and Johanna Beunk of Oakville, Ont., and Gerrit and Mary Dekkema of Richmond Hill, Ont.

Address: 3371 Bertrand Rd., Mississauga, ON L5L 4G3



Thank You

SLUMP:

Thankful to the Lord for sparing us together for so many years, we like to thank everyone who made our 60th wedding anniversary such a special day, with visits, gifts, cards and flowers. A special thank you to our children, grand- and great-grandchildren for the wonderful time we had.

Ralph and Audrey Slump, 3260 New St., Apt. 310, Burlington, ON L7N 3L4

Anniversaries

Chatham Strathroy
1950 March 17 1995

We thank and praise God that we can celebrate the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

JAKE and ALY ARENDS
(nee BOS)

May God continue to bless and keep you both.

Love and congratulations Dad and Mom, Grandpa and Grandma.

Minnie & Pete Boersma — Mt. Brydges
Mike & Cynthia (Brenden), Doreen, Kevin, Darryl, Melinda
Jerry & Marg Arends — Strathroy
Chris, Laura, Tim, Steven
John & Diane Arends — Strathroy
Will
Jake & Janie Arends — St. Thomas
Joe, James, John, Jeffrey
Charlie & Henny Arends — Hagersville
Susan, Marie, Arlene, Greg
Ron & Mary Arends — St. Thomas
Jake, Amanda
Cindy & Arnold Struyk — Listowel
Kyle, Jason

An open house will be held for our parents on Saturday, March 18, 1995, in the Fellowship Hall of Westmount Chr. Ref. Church, 405 Drury Lane, Strathroy, Ont., from 1:30-4:00 p.m.

Their home address is: 313 Helen Drive, Strathroy, ON N7G 3M6

Springdale Gorrie
1960 March 4 1995

"Blessed are they who put their trust in God..." (Ps.2:12).

Congratulations to

GERRIT and TRUDY BORG
(nee GEERTSEMA)

with the occasion of their 35th wedding anniversary.

May you celebrate your special day with a heart that rejoices in God's gift of life. Thank you for all that you have done for us.

Love from your children and grandchildren:

Ray & Arlene Borg — Nepean
Joyanna, Jonathon
Margaret Borg — Nepean
Jon & Sharon Dreise — Fordwich
Amanda

Home address: Box 94, 86 George St., Gorrie, ON N0G 1X0

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Cecil and Betty Kielstra (nee Schenk) on the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary!

Anniversaries

1955 March 9 1995

"Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord, his God" (Ps.146:5).

With praise and thanks to God, we joyfully announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

CECIL and BETTY KIELSTRA
(nee SCHENK)

May God continue to bless you in the years to come. Much love and best wishes from your children and grandchildren:

Henry & Marg Kielstra — St. Thomas
Jeremy, John, Beth, Joel
Peter & Jackie Kielstra — Kanata
James & Sherry Kielstra — St. Thomas
Paula, Bradley
Marg & Ray Wilmot — London
Lindsay, Ashley, Billy

Open house at St. Thomas First Chr. Ref. Church, Saturday, March 11, 1995, from 2-4:30 p.m.

Best wishes only please.

Home address: 173 First Avenue, St. Thomas, ON N5R 4A9

Teachers

BELLEVILLE, Ont.: Belleville District Chr. School is accepting applications for the **principal/teacher** position, beginning with the 1995/96 school year. B.D.C.S. is a multi-denominational Christian School with approximately 100 students, Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8.

The applicant must be a committed Christian who will provide leadership for and work closely with faculty and staff, board members and parents. For more information contact:

Leo VanArragon, Principal
Belleville Distr. Chr. School
R.R. #5
Belleville, ON K8N 4Z5
Telephone: (613) 962-7849

BOWMANVILLE, Ont.: Knox Chr. School invites applications for an **intermediate level teacher** (full-time), **kindergarten teacher** (60%) and a **resource/special education teacher** (50%). If you would like to become part of an exciting, growing school (current enrollment - 250 in JK-8) in a modern, well-equipped facility within a park-like semi-rural setting, forward your letter of application and resume to the principal:

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Knox Chr. School
410 Scugog Street
Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2
Phone: (905) 623-5871
Fax: (905) 623-8877

Teachers

DUNCAN, B.C.: The Duncan Chr. School Association operates a Christian interdenominational day school from K-12, with 340 students. We invite applications for the following elementary positions: **Possible vacancy** at the **upper intermediate level. A Special Education teacher** is also needed. Computer instruction skills are an asset. The qualifying applicant should be eligible for BC certification. Please send applications, resume and reference to:

Mrs. J.M. Spyksma
5781 Chesterfield Street
Duncan, BC V9L 3M1
Phone: (604) 746-5341
Fax: (604) 746-3615

HOUSTON, B.C.: The Houston Chr. School is an expanding school that needs to fill the following positions:

1. Principal/Teacher
2. Grade 11 teacher with area specialisation in English/Social studies
3. Part-time Kindergarten teacher

Interested teachers are encouraged to contact the school:

Houston Chr. School
Doyle Smiens, Principal
Box 237, Houston, BC V0J 1Z0
Phone: (604) 845-7736
Fax: (604) 845-7736

Obituaries

Nyega, Fr. Abbotsford, B.C.
June 14, 1905 - Feb. 7, 1995

On Tuesday, Feb. 7, 1995, the Lord called home His child,

MELLE JACOBI

Loving husband for almost 65 years of Goitske Jacobi-de Boer.

Dear father of:
Reinder & Marie Jacobi — Jarvis, Ont.
Rienk & Emmy Jacobi — Carambei, Brazil
Jonas & Jenny Jacobi — Sardis, B.C.
Charlie & Alie Elgersma — Sardis, B.C.

Dear opa of 16 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Correspondence address: #9-33433 Marshall Rd., Abbotsford, BC V2S 1K8

Sept. 9, 1917 - Feb. 16, 1995

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom.8:38-39).

God suddenly took to himself our father and grandfather

JAN (JOHN) KUIPERS

at the age of 77.

Beloved husband of Hillegonda Kuipers (nee Moes) of Whitby, Ont.

Dear father of:
John & Hennie Kuipers — Oshawa
Henk & Ginny Kuipers — Whitby
Harmine Kuipers & Micheal Deadman — B.C.

Dear grandfather (Opa) of Connie, Heather & David, Ron, Darlene and Shannon.

Correspondence address: 100 Glen Hill Dr. S., Whitby, ON L1N 8R4

Teachers

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Toronto, Ont.
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and a
Part-time Resource teacher

Our school of 138 students and nine staff was established in 1958 and is situated in a northwest suburb of Metropolitan Toronto known as Rexdale. If you are interested in being part of a team of dedicated teachers supported by a committed Christian community, we invite you to apply for this position. We look forward to assisting you use your talents and gifts in our school to help prepare God's children for service in His kingdom. Please send resumes or direct inquiries to:

Coby Jonker, Principal
28 Elmhurst Drive
Rexdale, ON M9W 2J5

Classifieds

Teachers

LACOMBE, Alta.: Lacombe Chr. School, approximately 325 students in K-9, located in Central Alberta, invites applications from qualified teachers for a **possible junior high math-science-computer studies position**, and **possible elementary positions**. Applicants must qualify for Alberta teacher certification. Please send resume and letter of application to:

Wernart van Deventer
Lacombe Chr. School
P.O. Box 1749
Lacombe, AB T0C 1S0
Phone: (403) 782-6531
Fax: (403) 782-5760

LONDON, Ont.: The **London Parental Chr. School** invites beginning and experienced teachers to apply for a **kindergarten position** and a **possible teaching position at the primary or junior level.** Expertise in computer studies and physical education would be an asset. Please send a letter of application and resume to:

Mr. Herb Goodhoofd, Principal
London Parental Chr. School
202 Clarke Road
London, ON N5W 5E4

We look forward to hearing from you.

PRINCE ALBERT, Ont.:
Scugog Chr. School, located on the scenic shores of Lake Scugog, just a short drive **north east of Toronto**, is accepting applications for an **anticipated opening** at the **primary junior level.** If you are interested please forward your resume to:

Mr. John Lunshof, Principal
Scugog Chr. School
P.O. Box 3308
Prince Albert, ON L9L 1C3
Phone: (905) 985-3741

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE, Alta.: Rocky Chr. School, an interdenominational school in Central Alberta will now accept applications for the 1995/96 school year. A **definite opening** in **Grade 1**, a **possible opening** in **Grade 6** and **Junior High**. Preference will be given to those with area specialization in Bible, Social, Boy's Physical Education in the Junior High Level. Please forward application letter, transcripts, resumes including a Philosophy of Christian Education statement to:

Mr. Wm. Slofstra, Principal
Rocky Chr. School
5204-54 Avenue
Rocky Mountain House, AB
T0M 1T3
For more info. call:
(403) 845-3516 or
(403) 845-5598

SMITHERS, B.C.: Bulkley Valley Chr. School has **two definite intermediate openings** and other **possible openings** at the primary and high school levels. Please address all enquiries and resumes to:

Mr. Evert Vroon, Principal
P.O. Box 3635
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

SMITHVILLE, Ont.: Covenant Chr. School invites applications for the 1995/96 school year. A **half time position in grade 1/2** and a **full-time position in grade 6/7** are available. Please direct your applications including letters of reference to:

Mel Elzinga, Principal
Smithville Covenant Chr. School
6470 Regional Road #14
Smithville, ON L0R 2A0
Phone: (905) 957-7796

SURREY, B.C.: Fraser Valley Chr. High School, an interdenominational school in the Reformed tradition serving families and students in the lower Fraser Valley, has **possible openings** in the areas of **computer studies** and **industrial education** for the **1995/96** school year. Applicants should send resumes to:

Mr. Al Boerema, Principal
Fraser Valley Chr. High School
15353-92 Avenue
Surrey, BC V3R 1C3
Phone: (604) 581-1033

TABER, Alta.: Taber Chr. School has a **definite opening** in the **primary grades** and a **possible opening** in **junior high.** Please address your inquiries or resumes to:

Henry Ronda, Principal
Box 2256
Taber, AB T0K 2G0
Phone: (403) 223-4550
Fax: (403) 223-4693

VANCOUVER, B.C.: Vancouver Chr. School, a denominationally diverse community currently offering Kindergarten through Grade 10, anticipates having **full-time openings** for **Grade 6, Grade 6/7** and **Learning Assistance**, as well as a **part-time (60-75%) French position** for the 1995/96 school year. If you are a fully-certified teacher and would be interested in participating in the development of Christian education in the Vancouver area please send your resume, indicating your areas of interest and expertise, to:

Ron Donkersloot, Principal
Vancouver Chr. School
3496 Mons Drive
Vancouver, BC V5M 3E6

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Please respond in writing to:
Mr. Jim Vanderkooy, Principal
92 Glancaster Road, Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9
Fax: (905) 648-3139, prior to March 21, 1995

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PRINCIPALS

The **Association for Christian Education of St. Catharines**, Ont., is seeking applications for

Two Principal positions
for
Calvin Memorial Christian School (K-8)
and for
Beacon Christian High School (9-12)

Qualified persons who have a vision for quality, Christ-centred education can reply to the:

Association for Christian Education
c/o John Vriend
2 O'Malley Drive
St. Catharines, ON L2N 6N7
or phone John Vriend at (905) 934-7684

All inquiries will be confidential!

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TEACHER RECRUITMENT

Abbotsford Christian School, Abbotsford, B.C., a parent-operated system, offers Christ-centred education from a Reformed perspective to students from various denominations in the **Central Fraser Valley** near **Vancouver, B.C.** Teachers committed to Jesus Christ and who qualify for B.C. Certification will be recruited for our three campuses. Contact the appropriate principal for further details.

Clayburn Hills Campus (K-7) **3939 Old Clayburn Road** **R.R. #9 Stn. Main** **Abbotsford, BC V2S 6R7** **Ed Noot, Principal**	Two possible openings in primary, one possible part-time itinerant intermediate position.
Heritage Campus (K-7) **2884 Mission Highway** **Abbotsford, BC V2S 3Y2** **Lloyd Den Boer, Principal**	French, assistant principal, possible Grade 6, possible music.
Secondary Campus **35011 Old Clayburn Road** **Abbotsford, BC V2S 7L7** **Dwight Moodie, Principal**	Four possible openings with combination of 3 or more of the following areas: Home Ec., Math, Bible, PE, Athletic Director (one period plus a stipend), Choral Music, French, Counselling and English.

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Classifieds

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fax (604) 532-1734

Teachers

Centennial Christian School
Terrace, B.C.
Teaching Positions Open

Centennial Christian School invites applications from committed Christian educators to fill definite openings for the 95/96 school year in the following areas:

Grade 8-10 — Math/Science
Grade 4-10 — French
Grade 6-10 — Band/Music

Further openings are anticipated at other grade levels and subject areas. Teachers with knowledge and background in computer instruction are also encouraged to apply.

Centennial Christian School presently offers Christian education to approximately 255 students in Kindergarten-Grade 10. The addition of Grades 11 and 12 is being planned. Please contact:

Centennial Christian School
Frank Voogd — Principal
3608 Sparks Street, Terrace, BC V8G 2V6
Phone: (604) 635-6172 Fax: (604) 635-9385

Langley Christian School
Langley, B.C.

Langley Christian School, an interdenominational school offering Christ-centred education to 470+ students at the K-8 level, is building again. A second campus, presently under construction, will house our Middle School (Gr. 6-8) students and introduce Grade 9 as our first High School year. Applications for both full-time and part-time teaching positions are now being invited for both campuses to help fill these needs:

K-5 Campus:
1. Grade 5 teacher (preferably with computer strength)
2. Possible primary position
3. Librarian (part-time)

6-9 Campus:
1. Grade 9 English/Bible teacher
2. French teacher (Gr. 6-9)
3. Library, Drama, Learning Assistance, Home Ec., Music/ Band (possible). These are part-time needs that could be combined.

Teachers who have a strong Christian commitment and are able to meet B.C. certification requirements should forward their resumes and inquiries to:

Leo Smit, Principal
Langley Chr. School, 21789-50 Avenue
Langley, BC V3A 3T2
Telephone: (604) 533-2222 Fax: (604) 533-7276

ADMINISTRATOR

Taber Chr. School, Taber, Alta., is in need of a principal for the 1995/96 school year. TCS, a K-9 school of 160 students located 50 kilometres east of Lethbridge, Alta., is one of two schools operated by the Society for Christian Education in Southern Alberta.
Applicants should be committed Christians and knowledgeable about the Reformed world and life view. Please direct all inquiries and resumes to:

Henry Ronda, Principal
P.O. Box 2256, Taber, AB T0K 2G0
Phone: (403) 223-4550 Fax: (403) 223-4693

Teachers

PRINCIPAL

Lacombe Christian School, Lacombe, Alta., is accepting applications for the position of **Principal** for the 1995/96 school year.
Lacombe Christian School is a school of 330 students serving Grades K-9. The school is located in the town of Lacombe, midway between Calgary and Edmonton.
The Lacombe Christian School is looking for an educational leader who is a committed Christian and who has the experience, vision and skills necessary to lead our staff and school.
Please send resume, statement of education philosophy and other pertinent information to:

Mr. Peter Zuidhof, Chairman of the Board
Box 1565, Lacombe, AB T0C 1S0
Phone: (403) 885-5263

DORDT COLLEGE
FACULTY POSITIONS

Dordt College is seeking Christian academicians for openings beginning August 1995 in the following areas:

Agri-business: (possible opening) farm management, marketing, and applied agricultural economics

Biology: (one-year position) genetics, microbiology, botany, and ecology

Business Administration: management and marketing or other areas

Chemistry: (possible opening) analytical, physical, and general chemistry

Economics: introductory and upper level courses

Engineering: electrical engineering

Health, Physical Education, Recreation: exercise science, health, coaching theory, women's volleyball

Social Work: (possible opening)

Theatre Arts: (possible opening) directing and related courses

Qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a letter of interest and curriculum vitae to Dr. Rockne McCarthy; Dordt College; 498 Fourth Avenue NE; Sioux Center IA 51250-1697; phone: 712-722-6333; fax: 712-722-4496; e-mail: rockne@dordt.edu

Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution and encourages the nominations and candidacies of women and minorities.

Trenton Christian School

invites applications for the position of

PRINCIPAL

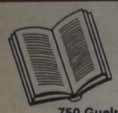
to assume responsibilities for the 1995/96 school year. We congratulate our current administrator on his new posting to Seoul, Korea. Please direct inquiries and application to:

Search Committee
Trenton Christian School
20 Fourth Avenue
Trenton, ON K8V 5N3
Phone (613) 392-3600

See Calendar of Events on page 18. . .

Classifieds

Miscellaneous



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Canadian Chaplain Committee of the Christian Reformed Church in North America invites applications for the position of

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- have specialized education/training in pastoral care, e.g. C.P.E., marriage and family, etc.
- possess significant managerial/administrative skills
- have vision and skills that will give strong innovative direction to Chaplaincy into the 21st century.

Please send letter of inquiry/resume by **March 31, 1995**, to:

Director of Personnel
Christian Reformed Church in North America
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49560-0500
Phone (616) 247-5881/Fax (616) 246-0834

Westminster Theological Seminary
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Vice President For Academic Affairs

Westminster Theological Seminary announces an opening for **vice president for academic affairs** with some teaching responsibilities. This is a full-time, tenure track position that begins July 1, 1996. Responsibilities include limited teaching of M.Div., M.A.R., and/or graduate-level (Th.M., PhD) courses with membership in a faculty department.

The seminary welcomes applications from qualified candidates of any ethnic, racial or national background. Applicants must have an earned academic doctorate in a biblical or theological field and be an ordained elder in a conservative Presbyterian or Reformed denomination. Commitment to biblical inerrancy, Reformed theology and Presbyterian church government, as shown by subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, is required. Salary will be commensurate with rank. Candidates are urged to send vita with names and addresses of two references immediately.

Contact Dr. Samuel T. Logan, Jr., President, at the above address or by phone: 215/887-5511 or 800/373-0119; fax: 215/215/887-5404; or e-mail: 73204.1171@compuserve.com.

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Half-Time Position Available

Toronto Hospital Ministry
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After eight years of working on behalf of the Christian Reformed Churches of Classis Toronto, our hospital chaplain, Rev. Gerard Ringnalda, plans to retire in September 1995. Cutbacks in the health care field have reduced this hospital ministry workload to half time.

We therefore invite **applications for this half-time hospital ministry work**. Applicants must be theologically trained, preferably have C.A.P.P.E. training in institutional settings, be able to work alone, must love the Lord and their fellowmen, be willing to live in or near Toronto, have a good understanding of and a deep appreciation for the Christian Reformed Church, feel comfortable working with Christian Reformed as well as non-Christian Reformed people, and preferably be able to converse in Dutch.

The work also requires travel by car to any of the hospitals in Toronto and its surrounding suburbs. For further information contact Rev. G. Ringnalda at 59 Moore Park, Willowdale, ON M2M 1M8, phone (416) 229-4610 or (705) 325-7056 evenings.

If you are qualified for this position, please submit your resume before **April 1, 1995**, to the chairperson of the Toronto Hospital Ministry Committee:

Rev. Peter Van Egmond
23 Norval Crescent, Brampton, ON L6W 1J1
Phone: (905) 451-1272 /Fax: (905) 459-8667 (at Holland Chr. Homes)

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Classifieds/Events

Personal

JANUARY 1995

THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUESTED TO CONTACT THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS:

ASSINK, D., born May 18, 1904, last known address in Canada: 1510-6 Avenue North, Lethbridge, Alberta.

van de(n) BERG, Frits, last known address in the Netherlands: Bazarstraat 16, Den Haag, emigrated to Canada May 3, 1954.

van BAAR, Antonius, born July 21, 1930, emigrated to Vancouver, Canada in 1957.

BECKERS (TIMMERMANS), J.M., born June 5, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1971.

BLIJLEVEN, Johannes C., born March 23, 1926 in Haarlemmermeer.

BOUMA, Elisabeth, born March 16, 1930, emigrated to Canada September 18, 1952.

Attention:

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Personal

van den BRINK-SCHEPERS, Paulina Hendrika, born January 23, 1930 in Amstenrade.

van de BROEK, Anton, born January 30, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1965.

BRANDEHOF, Paul Edmond Otto, born January 29, 1969, emigrated to Canada August 12, 1992.

BROUWER, Lambertus Johannes, born April 8, 1930, last known address in the Netherlands: J.P. Sweelinckstraat 27, Purmerend, emigrated to Canada August 31, 1979.

COSTA, Gio Battista, born March 25, 1931 in Hoensbroek.

DOALA, Huda, born June 20, 1974, emigrated to Canada May 30, 1994.

van DOREMALEN, Johannes Adrianus Cornelis, born July 26, 1930 in 's Hertogenbosch.

EVERS, Jan, born June 4, 1929 in Strijen.

FABER, Gerrit, born december 25, 1929 in Leek.

de GRAAFF, Bernardus Hermanus, born August 19, 1930 in Haarlem.

GRIZELL, Jan, born December 24, 1929 in Geldermalsen.

HAMER, Anna, born July 8, 1930, emigrated to Edmonton, Canada in 1960.

HARTMAN, Oepke Geert, May 2, 1931 in Borgercompagnie.

van der HEIJDEN, Elisabeth Hendrika, born October 7, 1930 in Hulsel.

HERMANS, Jan Willem, born November 5, 1929 in Schinveld.

Personal

van der HORST, Jacob, born December 14, 1929 in Amsterdam, last known address in the Netherlands: Schimmelstraat 27, Amsterdam, emigrated to Whitby, Canada September 13, 1957.

JONK, Johannes Theodorus, born June 11, 1929 in Avenhorn.

KLARENBEEK, Wilhelmus Paulus Bernardus, born April 2, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1966.

KLIPHUIS, Jans, born June 22, 1930 in Sappemeer.

KNOTSENBURG, Cornelius Teunis, born September 13, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1956.

KOENEN, Joseph Richardus, born June 17, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1965.

KONING, Klaas Pieter Meindert, born October 12, 1930, emigrated to Ottawa, Canada in 1958.

KOSTER, Koert, born October 11, 1929 in Oosterkesselen.

KUYPERS, Theo Harry, born November 6, 1928 in Bandoeng.

van LEEUWEN, Geertruida Wilhelmina Maria, born October 29, 1929 in Haarl'meer.

van LYNDEN, Rynhard B., born September 12, 1967.

MacPHEDRAN-JANSSEN, R., last known address in Canada: 31 Nally Street, Nepean, Ontario.

van der MEEN, Loesje, born March 27, 1937 in Amsterdam, emigrated to Canada October 1, 1954.

MELCHIOR (van de LINDE), M., born October 17, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1961.

Personal

de MUNCK, Margaretha Theophila, born February 7, 1930, last known address: 95 Acheson Boulevard, Scarborough, Ontario.

NEUTEBOOM, P., born November 21, 1930, emigrated to Cochran, Canada in 1957.

OOSTLANDER, Pieter, born July 11, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1964.

van PETTEN (KOKKELKOREN), Elisabeth, born August 17, 1945 in Haarlem, emigrated to Stammford, Ontario May 21, 1949.

PLAUM, Daniel Gerardus Maria, born September 1, 1928 in Heerlen.

PONTHIER (NOORDBEEK), widow of Noordbeek, Willem.

PRAAT, Divera Maria, born December 29, 1928 in Alkmaar.

van RAAMSDONK, Leendert, born March 10, 1930, last known address in the Netherlands: Heulweg 64, Kwintsheul, emigrated to Canada April 13, 1965.

ROMYN, Milius Julius, born Spetember 25, 1928 in Zeist.

van ROOY, Hubertus Petrus Franciscus Xaverius, born September 11, 1930 in Tilburg, last known address: 168 Stranmillis Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

van de SCHELDE, Samuel, born September 21, 1930, emigrated to London, Ontario in 1956.

STEIJVERS, Johannes Peter Hubertus, born March 23, 1931 in Nieuwenhagen.

STERKEN, Christiaan, born August 5, 1928 in Best.

Personal

STULIT, Johannes, born April 25, 1930.

TAN, K.K., born August 18, 1930, emigrated to Calgary, Alberta in 1982.

van VLIET, Maria Johanna Pietenella, born May 11, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1954.

van VLIET, Pieter Hendrikus, born May 15, 1930, last known address in the Netherlands: Kamerijkstraat 13, Etten Leur, emigrated to Canada April 4, 1967.

van der WAL, Albert, born July 21, 1930, emigrated to Beamville, Ontario in 1956.

van WEES, Johannes, born August 24, 1929 in Haarlem.

WEIJENBERG, Hubertus Jacobus, born June 16, 1931 in Maastricht.

WEIMER, Jurianus Antonius, born March 21, 1929 in Hilversum.

WIJENBERG, Jozef Hubertus, born August 27, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1958.

WIJNANTS, Adrianus J.M., born March 2, 1930 in Tilburg, emigrated to Canada in 1950.

WIND, Jacob, born November 4, 1929 in St. Nicolaasga.

ZWANIKKEN, C.H.B., born July 20, 1930, emigrated to Canada in 1960.

ZWARTS, Hendrikus, born December 9, 1930 in Utrecht.

CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS
1 DUNDAS STREET W., SUITE 2106
TORONTO, ONTARIO M5G 1Z3
TEL. (416) 598-2520

Calendar of Events

March 5 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Ralph Koops, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

March 9 A meeting for those interested in establishing an American (Canadian) Reformed Church in the Sarasota, Fl., area, along with a talk by Dr. Jelle Faber on "What is an American Reformed Church?" At 7:30 p.m., Welcome Center of Palmview First Baptist Church (49 St. at U.S. 41 S., across Skyway Village) **Palmetto**, Fl.

March 10-11 The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents "De Haan Kraait Victorie," a four-act comedy in the Dutch language. At 8 p.m., both evenings, Woodstock Collegiate Institute, **Woodstock**, Ont. Tickets/Info.: Bill Hesselink (519) 539-2134.

March 11 The "Liberation Choir 1995" in concert, 7:30 p.m., St. Paul's Cathedral, 472 Richmond St., **London**, Ont. Info. and tickets: (519) 659-2907.

March 14-16 Fourth annual conference on contemporary issues at Westminster Theological Seminary, **Philadelphia**, PA. Speakers: Carl F.H. Henry, Charles Colson, Wesley Roberts and Peter Lillback. Info.: (215)887-5511 or fax (215)887-5404.

March 17 Inauguration of Dr. Wayne Norman as Professor of Psychology, 8 p.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Reception to follow.

March 18 Reunion of Dutch drama group "Fama" at 4 p.m. Info.: Ada Van Meggelen, (416) 244-0883.

March 21 "Ministers' Conference" at Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Keynote speaker: Dr. Cornelius Plantinga Jr., on "Contours of Human Sin." Info./registration: (905) 648-2131.

March 21 "Pipelines for God," a one-day Can. Chr. Business Fed. conference at **Guelph**, Ont. Speakers: Gary Ginter and Phil Geldart. Info.: (905) 522-8602.

March 25 Combined concert by "The Hosanna Choir" and the "Mattaniah Male Choir," directed by Herman Den Hollander, accompanied by Andre Knevel and John Vanderlaan, 7:30 p.m, First CRC, **Hamilton**, Ont. Info.: (905) 648-6585.

Miscellaneous

Shoes from heaven

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University Student Praise & Worship Service

All current and former university and college students living in southern Ontario are invited to a praise and worship service to be held at the **Waterloo Chr. Ref. Church, 209 Bearinger Rd., Waterloo, Ont., at 7 p.m., on Sunday, March 12, 1995.**

For information contact:
Jeff Klingenberg at (519) 746-6752

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Racial prejudice in the church

The* Anglican Journal *(Feb. 1995) has discovered that in local congregations there is still ignorance, fear and prejudice about minorities. This in spite of a plea from the general synod to welcome people from all cultures and races into the fellowship of the church and to use also their gifts for leadership. We quote the following passages from the article:

"For generations, we have hidden behind the myth that racism and prejudice are solely problems of our southern neighbors.

"That myth has never been true, as testimony of our native people, of our immigrants of various nationalities and races, and thousands of our interned Japanese citizens, proves.

"Today that myth is crumbling. Minorities have become scapegoats for too many social ills, especially in larger urban centres such as Vancouver (immigrants from Hong Kong), Toronto (Jamaica and Vietnam), and Montreal (Haiti) where entire immigrant communities continue to be blamed for crimes committed by a few of their members.

"That ugly trend has spilled over into national policy making as well. Most recently it has appeared in the federal decision to cut immigration in response to the so-called 'flood' of immigrants who are supposedly syphoning off tax dollars and taking jobs.

"Immigration is, in fact, at the same level today, as a percentage of population, as it was in 1965. The difference is that in today's tough economic climate, immigrants, particularly those of different colors and races, are easy targets.

"Martin Luther King had a dream whereby people of all races, creeds and beliefs would be freed from the chains of bigotry and racism. Some Canadians share that dream. Yet combatting racism cannot be done by a few or by policies from above. Prejudice grows from the grassroots, where it is nourished by fear and ignorance, and can only be weeded out by education, compassion and positive action.

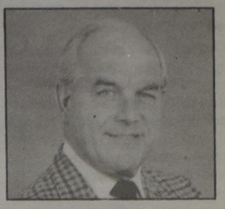
"It is up to parishes and dioceses to take up this gauntlet, to welcome people of color into congregations, to show respect for their insights and abilities by placing them in positions of influence, and to hold up to communities the truth that it is possible, and desirable, for people of different colors and cultures to work and live together."

Church press

Jacob Kuntz

quotes

Evangelicals in Parliament



The House of Commons has many evangelical members.* Christian Week *(Jan. 3) devoted an article to their presence in Parliament and also mentioned the names of the evangelical MPs. We shall omit most of those names, but it is interesting to see to which churches those members belong. Among them there is no church of the Reformed Persuasion.

"Because Preston Manning is a serious evangelical, the Reform party attracted many candidates who felt the same way.

"Our survey showed that of the 52 Reform MPs, 22 are either evangelical Christians or are considered by their colleagues to have a faith which lines up pretty closely to an evangelical stance. In addition, there are at least two Mormons, whose views are similar to the evangelicals on family values.

"Some of those listed are relatively new to the Christian faith — influenced in part by colleagues who have shared their faith or even discipled them. Others are seasoned evangelicals with lots of experience at grappling with Christian-oriented social issues. Still others are members of United, Lutheran or Catholic non-evangelical churches, but are known to seek out their evangelical parliamentary colleagues for fellowship and nurture.

"The evangelical denominations connected with some of the Reform MPs include Conference Baptist, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Evangelical Missionary, Full Gospel and Evangelical Free.

"For a party which is reputed to have less interest than others in women issues, Reform, surprisingly, has three evangelical women in key leadership roles: Deborah Grey, Sharon Hayes and Diane Ablonczy.

"Another surprising element in Reform's religious/political mix is the moderating influence the evangelicals bring to their caucus — sometimes to the chagrin of the party's detractors. Those critics would prefer to paint the Reformers as racist and ultra-fundamentalists. A closer look shows that perception as ill-fitting reality. And the reason is that the evangelicals — quietly encouraged by Manning — fairly consistently apply the biblical concepts of conciliation and compassion to the political agenda.

"On the Liberal side of the house, the three MPs whose names surface most often as being close to an evangelical fit are Industry Minister John Manley, Asia-Pacific Secretary Raymond Chan, and Alberta MP David Kilgour.

"Indeed, Christian MPs, no matter what their party affiliation, are constantly pressed to apply their faith to matters politic, while resisting the temptation to make political hay out of their values. In the moments when the pressure is greatest, they look to their Christian supporters for encouragement, constructive criticism and intercessory prayer."

Words and deeds

Catholic New Times ***(Jan. 22) contends that "Christian unity has to be thicker than paper." Christian churches do co-operate; for instance, recently in sending an ecumenical letter to the prime minister (signed by 144 religious leaders!) concerning Canada's social safety-net (which, in the opinion of these leaders, should be reformed around the needs of people). But is this common social concern among the churches also translated into social action? Is there not only consensus, but also conversion? We read:***

"Christian unity in Canada is more polite than profound. The Scripture readings for this Sunday make it painfully clear that religious unity, to be able to bear the weight of justice, has to be a lot thicker than paper.

"When Jesus, in Luke's gospel, proclaimed in the synagogue that his mission would lead to the liberation of the oppressed in the urgent power of the Spirit, the response he got included an attempt to throw him over a cliff.

"It's always the case that serious work for justice shatters superficial unity. Believers can walk together towards justice only if they let themselves be wrenched away from more placid paths by the Spirit's disturbing guidance. We are called to hunger and thirst for justice in one Body. But the life of that one body is a crucified and risen life. We cannot live it without being willing to risk everything for it.

"But what a harvest would follow that risky sowing! When God brings believers together in impatient love for those whom the powerful of this world despise, miracles of transformation become possible.

"Imagine a country where church membership would normally include tough, persistent action and careful organization for justice; where an ecumenical unity is strong enough to stand the crucifying strains of challenging the status quo for the sake of the Gospel.

"But the possibility of such grace is worth every effort of prayer and persistent seeking."

He did his part

By now everybody knows how large our national debt is: well over $500 billion — more than $17,000 per person. Do we care? Carl McNeill did. He worried about it and paid his share when he died (reported in the* United Church Observer, *January 1995).

"Up until his death at 100 last year the retired bachelor farmer read voraciously and was fond of talking politics with his friends from Thamesview United in Fullarton, Ont. A frequent topic was the deficit. 'He was very concerned about the growth of the federal debt over the last 20 years,' says his friend and lifelong neighbor, Walter MacDougald.

"Just how concerned became clear when McNeill drew up his will, with MacDougald as executor. McNeill directed that a sizeable part of his estate go to the federal government to pay off his portion — and then some — of the federal debt. After McNeill died last February, MacDougald resolved to see his friend's wishes realized.

"On Oct. 30, in the presence of a battery of news reporters and photographers, MacDougald presented Finance Minister Paul Martin with a cheque for $37,634.61 from McNeill's estate. Martin used the occasion to hammer home his deficit-cutting message, citing McNeill's act as symbolic for all Canadians. The gesture struck a responsive note across the country, with newspapers, television and radio all carrying stories about McNeill."

Jacob Kuntz is a retired pastor who lives in Brampton, Ont., where he does pastoral work part-time in Holland Christian Homes.

Vision 2000 consultations encourage and equip church leaders across Canada

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Since January, Vision 2000 Canada has been holding a series of eight consultations in centres across the country designed to equip and motivate pastors and other church leaders for evangelism. The consultations mark the mid-point of Vision 2000's 10-year mandate, and will culminate in a national conference to be held in Burlington, Ont., at the end of March.

All the consultations are focused on four themes, says Don Moore, Vision 2000's executive director. These are: a vision for identifying needs, hope based on "the evidence of God at work," commitment to refocusing evangelism, and cooperation between different Christian groups. "Our consultations are exceeding our expectations," says Moore, who is "very happy" with the results so far.

Each consultation has been slightly different, reflecting the input of local participants. All feature both outside and local speakers leading workshops dealing with many evangelism-related topics.

"The purpose of the consultations was to hear what's going on locally," says Steve Long, chairperson for the Toronto event, which was held January 26 to 28. It focused mainly on penetrating the marketplace with Christianity, addressing ethnic diversity and reaching out to the poor.

"The churches need to become a more caring community and to extend mercy to the needy," says Long, adding, "one of the biggest needs is for people to stand up and let people know they are Christians."

Living one's faith

According to Long, one effect of the conference was "a call to pastors to encourage their people to live out their faith during the week." There has also been "a renewed sense of churches crossing denominational lines.... More and more, people are viewing other denominations as partners."

Workshops at the Toronto meetings dealt with topics such as how to analyze and understand your neighbourhood, reaching out to homosexuals and lesbians, developing a seeker-sensitive church, and making friends with the media. Speakers included several Korean and Chinese church leaders.

COURTESY VISION 2000

Don Moore, Vision 2000's executive director

Speaking on urban evangelism, Dr. Glenn Smith urged his listeners to "love the city — don't leave it." During the presentation, Luella Schmidt, Ontario director for Child Evangelism Fellowship, began to cry. "I've never been emotionally involved with Toronto," she says. "But all the world has come to us, and I need to start again, to learn how to reach children in the city, in Toronto."

Commenting on the Toronto consultation, Moore says it "brought a sense of cooperation and a fresh realization of the challenges of bringing the gospel to a major urban area."

The first consultation took place in Moncton, New Brunswick in mid-January. Despite bad winter weather, about 230 delegates from all four Atlantic provinces attended it. Featured speakers included Vancouver evangelist Dr. Terry Winter, who challenged about 500 young people at an evening youth rally, and Laurel Buckingham, who pastors the largest church in Atlantic Canada. His church, Moncton Wesleyan, has grown from a congregation of 65 to 1,300 since Buckingham started his ministry there 25 years ago.

One enthusiastic participant in the consultation was Harlyn Purdy, pastor of Calvary Temple in Charlottetown. "From my personal experience, this was the most beneficial, most practical and most energizing event that I have ever been to in my entire ministry," he says. He described the workshops as "short on theory and long on practical application, which for me is what's necessary... I came back with some good helps for equipping leadership."

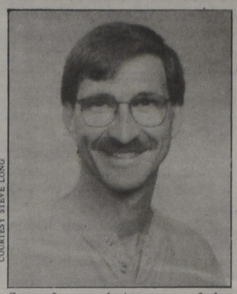
Besides equipping for evangelism, the Moncton consultation also brought denominations together. "One of the things that I would hope for is a growing sense of comfort in working with others in a different denomination [who] share the same passion," says Allan Demond, chairperson of the Moncton consultation. "That is one of the major gains I see coming out of the Vision 2000 Canada efforts."

Moore says the Moncton consultation's emphasis on children and youth was unique among the eight regional gatherings.

Quebec a unique challenge

At the second consultation, held in Montreal January 19 to 21, three-quarters of the 200 delegates were francophones, and all the main sessions were presented in French and English. Twenty-two denominations and 15 parachurch organizations were represented at the conference, according to Vision 2000.

Dr. Glenn Smith, chairperson of the Montreal consultation (who also spoke at the Toronto meetings), challenged participants to "chase away the spirit of doubt that dominates evangelism in Quebec" and "put away our political agendas for these two days."



COURTESY STEVE LONG

Steve Long, chairperson of the Toronto consultation.

One of the highlights of the Montreal consultation was the drama *Un Monologue du Bum* performed by Alain-Pierre Pelletier. He is one of the people featured in *In Search of Hidden Heroes* — a new book published by Vision 2000 which features ordinary people across Canada who have unique ways of sharing their faith. The book is being distributed at each of the consultations.

Don Posterski, author and sociologist for World Vision Canada, spoke on religious values in Canada, and insisted on not assuming that our non-Christian friends have no spiritual history.

"Posterski encouraged me to take a more positive approach with friends I've been wanting to share the gospel with," commented Ruth Lewis, director of InterVarsity in Quebec. "He opened up a door for me in witnessing by suggesting that we ask others about their spiritual history."

Robin Guinness, rector of St. Stephen's Anglican Church, commented, "Perhaps the best spinoff of the whole conference was getting into closer contact with other parts of the Christian community in Montreal."

Vision 2000 has just completed further consultations in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Calgary, and will hold its last regional meeting in Vancouver, March 2 to 4.

Sports involvement popular in Ontario's Christian Reformed churches

Alan Doerksen

Team sports are a popular pastime for many CRC members across Ontario. But some sports are more popular in different areas, and not all players agree that team sports should be competitive.

Hockey is one of the most popular team sports among Ontario's Christian Reformed churches. Classis Chatham has both a junior hockey league (for ages 16 to 24) and a senior league (for ages 24 and older).

Hockey players all male

The teams come from either Christian Reformed or Reformed churches, and all players must be connected with a church, says Wayne Haagsma, diaconal conference secretary for Classis Chatham.

As in other parts of Ontario, only men or boys play on the hockey teams.

Volleyball is also popular among both men and women in Classis Chatham. Annual volleyball tournaments are held in the area, the latest one being in late February. There is also a baseball league for London-area churches, and local churches are trying to set up a soccer league.

Sports involvement is good for providing "fellowship with fellow Christians," says Haagsma. Competition in Christians sports is alright "if it's set up properly."

In Classis Huron, there is a young people's hockey league for ages 16 and up, with teams from several Christian Reformed churches, says Rob Datema. Datema, who attends Blyth (Ont.) CRC, is acting president of the local Trillium League, an organization that works with various church groups and organizes activities such as winter camps for young people.

In February, a "non-contact" hockey tournament was held in Blyth. Eight teams participated — seven from Classis Huron and one from Ingersoll. A wide age range of players took part in the tournament: boys and men aged 16 to 45. (The Blyth team won.)

Basketball may get bigger

Still, "hockey is not a predominant sport" in the area, says Datema. It is losing popularity, possibly because of some people's concern over violence, he suggests.

Mixed volleyball is popular among young people in the area, according to Datema. There are 13 church volleyball teams in Classis Huron, and every other month there is a

See **SPORTS** *page 6...*